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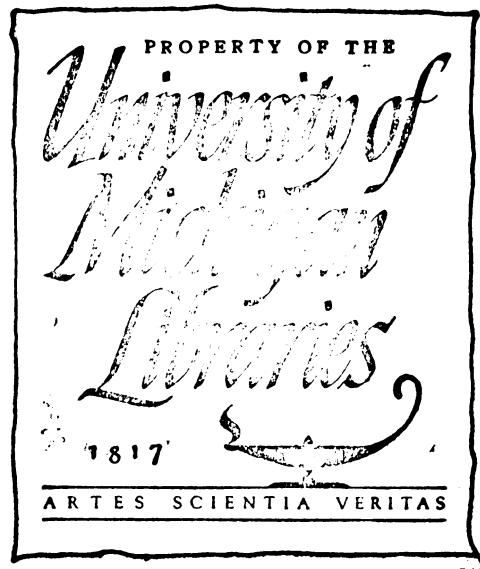
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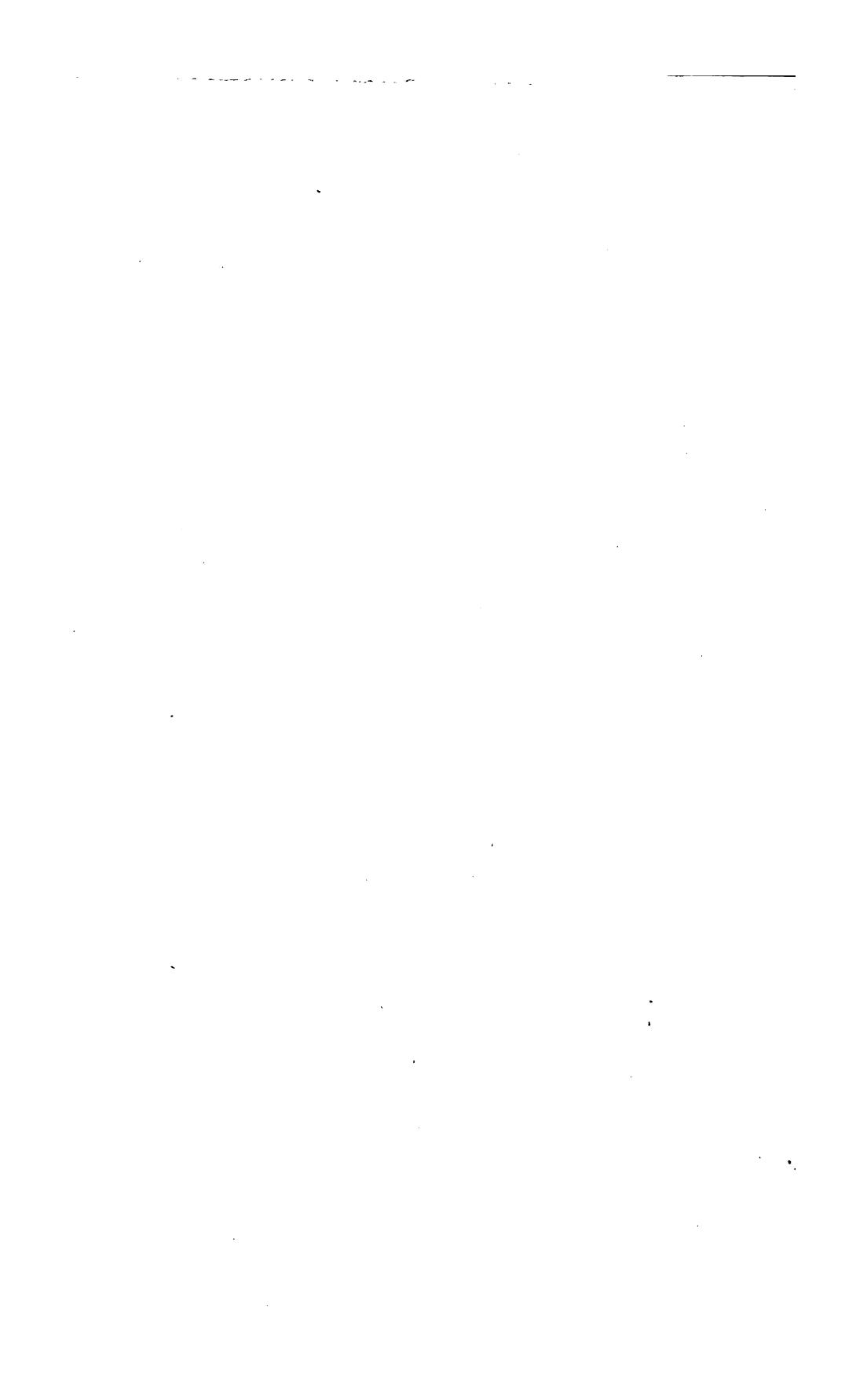
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A N E S S A Y  
ON THE  
INFLUENCE  
OF  
W E L S H T R A D I T I O N  
UPON  
*The Literature*  
OF  
GERMANY, FRANCE, AND SCANDINAVIA;

WHICH OBTAINED THE PRIZE OF THE ABERGAVENNY  
CYMREIGYDDION SOCIETY, AT THE  
EISTEDDVOD OF 1840.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF  
ALBERT SCHULZ,  
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF WOLFRAN VON ESCHENBACH, &c. &c.

Des haben die Warheit  
Artus' Lanßlate,  
Si zehent, er lebe noch hiute.

Iwein V. 12. Hartman v. Aue.

LLANDOVERY:  
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM REES: SOLD ALSO BY LONGMAN  
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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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In the List of Prizes offered by the Society of the Abergavenny Cymreigydion, for 1840, the following notice appeared;

"For the best Essay on the Influence which the Welsh Traditions have had on the Literature of Germany, France, and Scandinavia; A PRIZE OF EIGHTY GUINEAS."—"The Essay to be written either in Welsh, English, German, or French."

Previous to the ensuing Eisteddvod, which was held in the autumn of that year, Essays were received from different parts of the Continent written principally in German and French. These compositions were transmitted to His Excellency the Chevalier Bunsen, Prussian Minister Plenipotentiary at Bern, who had consented to undertake the office of Judge, and whose eminent literary attainments rendered him peculiarly qualified for the task.

After entering minutely into the respective merits of the compositions, His Excellency concluded his report to the Society by awarding the Prize to the

**Essay by Professor Schulz, at the same time passing upon it a high eulogium, and strongly recommending its publication in the English language.**

Encouraged by this opinion, and aided by the kind assistance of friends, the translator has ventured to lay the following pages before the public; in the hope that to those interested in the subject, the closeness of the translation may, in some degree, compensate for the abruptness of the style, and the repetitions which are occasionally apparent.

September 30th, 1841.

## C O N T E N T S.

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### INTRODUCTION.

#### \* CHAPTER I.

##### INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE LITERATURE OF FRANCE.—PAGE.

FIRST PERIOD.—Arthur the National Hero, A.D. 600 to 1066 . . . . .	7
SECOND PERIOD.—Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, A.D. 1066 to 1150 . . . . .	32
THIRD PERIOD.—Arthur and the Sangraal, A.D. 1150 to 1500 . . . . .	47
FABLE.—The Mabinogion . . . . .	65

#### \* CHAPTER II.

##### INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE LITERATURE OF GERMANY.—PAGE 73.

#### \* CHAPTER III.

##### INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE LITERATURE OF SCANDINAVIA.—PAGE 84.

#### \* CHAPTER IV.

##### INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE LITERATURE OF FRANCE, WITH REGARD TO CONSTRUCTION.

FIRST.—Rhyme . . . . .	95
SECOND.—Metre . . . . .	103

#### \* CHAPTER V.

##### FALL OF CHIVALROUS POETRY.—PAGE 107.

#### APPENDIX.

FIRST.—Leonine Verse . . . . .	111
SECOND.—German Verse . . . . .	112
THIRD.—Ancient Romances of Arthur in various Languages . . .	112

#### ADDENDA.

FIRST.—The Holy Graal . . . . .	115
SECOND.—The Templars and the Knights of the Graal . . . . .	121
THIRD.—The Graal and Joseph of Arimathea . . . . .	126



## INTRODUCTION.

In the intellectual life of a people, Heroic Tradition forms a separate organization, to which belong its own laws of developement. It has appeared to us, that in the history of early Tradition, there are four points especially to be considered ; and we will commence by demonstrating them, in order to explain the principles by which we have been guided in the researches that form the subject of the following pages.

1. History is the principal basis of Tradition ; and at a later period it is from History that the elements for the further developement of Tradition are drawn ; but it springs and grows at a period when Poetry and History are confounded together, and the truth of Tradition is never doubted. On this account we see historical personages appear in the land of Fiction, and historical facts appropriated to fabulous Heroes, often occasioning the greatest anachronisms and most heterogeneous combinations.

2. The organic life of Tradition is seen in the tendency to unite different tales which were previously entirely independent of each other ; and here we recognise the want of that unity, which belongs to poetic fiction.

3. Tradition grows and increases, both from the repetition of favorite histories in a modified form, and from multiplying and amplifying the deeds of Heroes, so that if we possess only recent compilations, it is often very difficult to distinguish the original matter from that which is added at a later period. This is the first indication of a departure from the essentially poetical principle of Tradition. Every poet belongs peculiarly to the age in which he lives ; and at all periods a desire exists to comprehend whatever interests and agitates at the time being. Hence arise causes that essentially influence the developement and physiognomy of Tradition.

4. From the change in customs, and the principal tendencies and political and intellectual interests of the age. This explains the continual variations in the Traditions of the same people at different epochs, and the still greater changes in those Countries where they had been introduced, and where, by such modifications, it tends to gain a new Nationality. In following and observing it, from its first origin through all the periods of its developement down to its latest form, it is indispensable that we should equally direct our attention to the political state and the intellectual history of the people, and the epochs at which we see it re-appear. It is in this manner we must follow up our researches upon the influence of the Welsh Traditions on the literature of Germany, France, and Scandinavia—an influence not every where the same, but differing according to the Times and Places where they were found.

## CHAPTER I.

### INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE LITERATURE OF FRANCE.

#### FIRST PERIOD.

ARTHUR THE NATIONAL HERO,—A.D. 600 TO 1066.

KING ARTHUR is the centre of the ancient national Traditions of Wales ; he is the single root of a gigantic tree, whose branches, for nearly ten centuries, spread over the whole of Europe, until in modern times it withered away together with the last remains of Chivalry.

The oldest accounts of the Chronicles of King Arthur are short and meagre. The Anglo-Saxon Bede knows nothing of the British Kings, nor of the origin of the Britons, whom he derives from Eneas and Brutus. He names Cassibelaunus, Androgeus, St. Albanus, Vortigern ; he mentions the wars of the Britons and the Saxons against the Romans ; Hengist and Horsa, St. Oswald, and his miracles ; but he is entirely silent upon the subject of Arthur. In concluding his History with the words, “*Hæc de Historia ecclesiastica Brittanorum et maxime gentis Anglorum prout vel ex literis antiquorum, vel ex traditione majorum, vel ex mea ipsa cognitione scire potui digessi Beda,*” he leads us to suppose, that he found nothing remarkable in the Traditions of the eighth century. Besides Bede was an Anglo-Saxon, which, from the hostile separation of the two nations, is a sufficient reason for supposing that the Welsh Traditions were unknown to him. Nen-

nius, who wrote about the year 858, speaks of Arthur, and at the same time gives us an interesting explanation of his name in these words: "At that time the Saxons greatly increased in strength and numbers in Britain; and after the death of Hengist," (at the end of the fifth century,) "his son Ochta passed over from the northern part of Britain to the kingdom of Kent; and from him are descended the Kings of that country. Arthur together with the Kings of the Britons fought against the Saxons; but he was the commander in battle, and was victorious in every engagement. (Arthur when translated signifies the *terrible Bear*, or the *Iron Hammer of the teeth of Lions.*)"<sup>1</sup> In the Sixty Third Chapter, Nennius continues.—"Arthur went to Jerusalem, and there made a cross of the same dimensions with the real cross, which was consecrated there; and for three successive days he fasted and watched and prayed before the holy cross, that the Lord would, by this standard, give him the victory over the Pagans; which was granted to him. Pieces of this cross are still preserved at Wedale with great veneration. Wedale (an English word, signifying the Valley of Grief,) is a village in the Province of Lothian."<sup>2</sup> He mentions the twelve expeditions of Ar-

<sup>1</sup>"In illo tempore Saxones invalescebant, et crescebant non modice in Britannia. Mortuo autem Hengisto, Ochta filius ejus transivit de sinistrali parte Britanniae ad Regem<sup>1</sup> Cantuariorum, et de ipso orti sunt Reges illius patriæ. Artur pugnabat contra illos in illis diebus, videlicet Saxones cum regibus Britonum; sed ipse Dux erat bellorum: et in omnibus bellis victor extitit. [Artur, Latine translatum, sonat ursus horribilem, vel malleum ferreum, molæ leonum.]"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>"Nam Artur Ierosolimam perrexit, et ibi crucem ad quantitatem Salutifere Crucis fecit, et ibi consecrata est, et per tres continuos dies jejunavit, vigilavit, et oravit coram Cruce Dominica, ut ei Dominus victoriam daret per hoc signum de Paganis; quod et factum est; cuius fractæ adhuc apud Wedale in magna veneratione servatur.

thur,<sup>1</sup> and in the last makes him slay 840 enemies with his own hand. Here we perceive the intention of Nennius to surround the Hero of the past with the halo of sanctity, as was also done in the instance of Charlemagne. "The Annales Asseau," which extend to the year 914, pass over

[Wedale Anglice: *Vallis doloris*, Latine: *Wedale est villa in Provincia Lodonesie.*]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Servantur.—The passages in parentheses are evidently interpolations, and are found only in particular copies, where they are in a later hand than the text. See Stevenson's Edition.

<sup>1</sup> Though the exact rendering of the author is given here, [Feldzugen,] yet it may be proper to remark that in this, as in many other works of the middle ages, the word *bellum* is understood to signify a *single battle*, and not an *expedition*; and that such is the meaning in the present passage appears evident, from the remainder of the narration, in which the twelve battles are enumerated:—

"Primum bellum fuit in ostium fluminis quod dicitur Glein; secundum, et tertium, et quartum, et quintum super aliud flumen quod dicitur Dubglas, et est in regione Linnuis. Sextum bellum super flumen quod vocatur Bassas. Septimum fuit bellum in silva Celidonis, id est Cat Coit Celidon. Octavum fuit bellum in castello Guinmon, in quo Arthur portavit imaginem Sanctæ Mariæ perpetuae Virginis super humeros suos, et pagani versi sunt in fugam in illo die, et cædes magna fuit super illos per virtutem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, et per virtutem Sanctæ Mariæ virginis genitricis ejus. Nonum bellum gestum est in Urbe Legionis. Decimum gessit bellum in littore fluminis, quod vocatur Tribruit. Undecimum factum est bellum in monte, qui dicitur Agned. Duodecimum fuit bellum in monte Badonis, in quo corruerunt in uno die nongenti sexaginta viri de uno impetu Arthur; et nemo prostravit eos nisi ipse solus, et in omnibus bellis victor extitit."—Stevenson's Nennius.

In the Vatican copy of Nennius, published by Gunn, these battles are given in precisely the same order, and with but slight variations in the names:—"Tunc belliger Arthur cum militibus brytanis, atque regibus contra illos pugnabat. Et licet multi ipso nobiliores essent, ipse tamen duodecies dux belli fuit, victorque bellorum. Primum bellum contra illos iniit iuxta hostium fluminis quod dicitur glein." &c. &c.—TRANSLATOR.

Arthur is silent, and appears rather to follow the ~~written~~<sup>written</sup> work of Authentic History.

Gildas, the first Welsh Chronicler, who was born in the year in which the Battle of Badon Mounn was fought, and who died in 570, wrote a book "De excidio Britanniae." We have not seen it, but Henry of Huntingdon quotes it, affirming that Gildas speaks of the twelve expeditions of Arthur against the Saxons, which that king conducted in the most courageous and brilliant manner. In the eighth expedition he carried the image of the Holy Virgin on his shoulders; and it was through the means of this image,

<sup>1</sup> In the History of Wales lately published in the Welsh Language, by the Rev. T. Price, the author has the following remark upon this passage of Nennius:—

"Ymae yr ymadrodd 'super humeros eius'—'ar ei poppidum,' yn y daro Lladrin uchod, yn fy abhauddu yn fawr i cybied fod yr awdwr ym cyfeiriad o'r Gymraeg, ac yn eangymyrryd yr ystyr. Y gair Gymraeg *Ygwydd*, *Torcas*, ac *Ygwydd*, uchod o'r omff, ydym mae gylltlyb, yn enwedig mewn hen ygrifâu, ac mai hewdd fyddai en causyngiad; ac yn lle cyfeiriad 'Ar ei darian,' rhoddi 'Ar ei ys-gwyddau.' Ac ymae Gruffydd ap Arthur yn rheddi yr ymadrodd yn twy eglur, yn y modd canlynol:—*Humeris quoque suis, clypeum vocabulo, Priuen, in quo imago Sancte Marie.*' &c.—Ac ar ei ys-gwyddau, darina, a elwid *Priuen*, ar ba na yr oedd llun y Sancti midd Fair, &c."—HANES CYMRU, p. 261.

The expression *super humeros eius*,—*upon his shoulders*, in the above Latin sentence, inclines me to think that the author translated from the Welsh, and mistook the meaning of the original. The Welsh word *Ygwydd* a *Shield*, and *Ygwydd* a *shoulder*, are so similar, especially in old writings, as easily to occasion mistakes, and to cause the words to be translated *on his shoulder* instead of *on his shield*. And Gruffydd ap Arthur [Geoffrey of Monmouth] gives the words more explicitly, as follows:—"Humeris quoque suis, clypeum vocabulo, *Priuen*, in quo imago Sancte MARIE, &c."—Upon his shoulders his shield called *Priuen*, upon which was the image of the Holy Virgin.

And the above author gives a quotation from the Elegy of Llywarch Hén upon his son Gwén, in which the two words, *shield* and

and the assistance of God, that he was enabled to vanquish the Saxons. It must, however, be confessed, that this account is suspicious, since Geoffrey of Monmouth expressly states in his History, that neither Gildas nor Bede mention anything of Arthur, or of several other celebrated kings.<sup>1</sup>

William of Malmesbury, who wrote about 1143, in quoting a written History of Arthur, relates an heroic action of that king.—“We read in the acts of the most illustrious King Arthur, that when, on a certain Christmas at Caerleon, he had conferred military honours<sup>2</sup> upon a valiant youth named Ider<sup>3</sup> the son of King Nuth; and for the purpose of proving him, led him to the Hill of Frogs, now called Brentenol, where he had learnt there were three giants notorious for their crimes, in order to fight with them; the youth preceding Arthur and his companions without their knowledge, boldly attacked the giants, and slew them with a surprising slaughter.”<sup>4</sup> Hurrying on, Arthur finds Ider dying from exhaustion after the

*shoulder*, are brought into apposition in such a manner as to add considerable weight to his opinion :—

“Gwên wrth Lawen ydd wylwys neithwyr  
A'r ysgwyd ar ei ysgwydd ;  
A chan bu mab im' bu hywydd.”

Gwên by the [river] Lawen kept watch last night,  
With his shield on his shoulder ;  
And as he was my son, he was valiant.—Tr.

<sup>1</sup> This suspicion will appear altogether unfounded, when it is recollect that the work of Nennius is frequently attributed to Gildas.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> The order of knighthood seems to be implied.

<sup>3</sup> This is the Edeyrn ap Nudd, some of whose adventures are related in the Mabinogi of Geraint the son of Erbin. See the Mabinogion, by Lady Charlotte Guest.

<sup>4</sup> “Legitur in gestis illustrissimi regis Arturi, quod cum in quadam festivitate natalis Domini apud Karlium, strenuissimum adolescen-

combat; he leaves him to procure help, but it comes too late. On his return he finds Ider is dead. He was buried in the Abbey of Glastonbury, and Arthur established twenty four Monks, and assigned lands and money for their maintenance. Johannes Fordun (*Testorum Hist.* Thomas Hale, p. 639.) mentions the Tradition, according to which Arthur was to live for ever among his people.—  
 «Note, that in the year 542, Arthur, being mortally wounded in battle, went to be healed of his wounds to the Island of Avalon. We do not know how he died; but as he is said to have been buried in the Abbey Church of Glastonbury with an epitaph in this manner, so we believe him to remain there still, whence the line

‘Here lies Arthur, a King that was, and a King to be,’

for some of the race of the Britons believe that he is to come alive again, and restore them from a state of servitude to liberty.”<sup>21</sup> Here we see clearly the political reason which preserved the memory of Arthur among the Welsh and Normans who still existed in order that he might avenge

long idum vellet Regis Nudi, dictum Ider, insignis militaris strenue et cunctam experientiam caussa in montem Ramaram, nunc dictum thronum ubi duo gigantes maiestatis famosissimos esse indicantur exstant dimicantibus duxisse; item Tiro Arctaram ex quo rursum gigantes propinquos duos gigantes fortiter aggressi sunt et expugnati sunt.<sup>22</sup>

“Nec procul auctus sed levatus in bello letabiliter valde invictus ubi ex vanae tristis et fuscatae vestimenta. Ergo: non spumaq; nec flos amaraq; sed quod si excessus mortuorum de celo ab aliis eximere conatur, non regnanteq; quod est utrum ex mortuis omnes resiliantur, non resurcent.

<sup>21</sup> Deinde adhuc illius Regis memoria, saeculo sexto  
viximus, cum membra eiusdem Gallicorum, sive Gallorum, sive  
Normannorum, exponerentur.

on the Saxons the subjugation of his people. This Tradition is also found in Hartman von Aue, (v. 8 to 17,) but the political reason is unknown to him.

Er hat hi sinen jïten	He has in his time
Gehebet also schone,	Comported himself so well,
Daz er der eren krone	That he the crown of honour
Do truoe, unt noch sin name treect.	Did find, and (it) still bears his
Des habent die warheit	Of this know the truth [name];
Sine lantliute:	His compatriots:
Ei zehent, er lebe noch hiute	They say, he lives still to this day.
Er hat den lop erworben;	He has earned praise;
Zet mi der lip erstorben,	Though his body is dead,
So lebt doch jemer sin name.	Yet his name lives for ever.

William of Malmesbury, who cannot avoid speaking of the Arthur of History, ridicules the fabulous stories relating to him.—“This is the Arthur, of whom at this day the tales of the Britons rave. One who evidently deserved to be celebrated in the records of History rather than in the dreams of Fables.” And after referring to the valour of Arthur, and his repressing the encroachments of the barbarians, that is, of the Saxons, he says,—“Lastly in the attack of Badon Mount, trusting in the image of the Virgin which he placed upon his arms, he alone put to flight nine hundred of his enemies with incredible slaughter.”<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth pardons this jesting, because he could not have known the British works upon the exploits of Arthur. It is in Wales that the memory of this valiant king is prin-

<sup>1</sup> “Hic est Arthurus de quo Brittonum nuge hodieque delirant, dignus plane quem non fallaces somniarent fabulae, sed veraces praedicarent historiae, intumescentes, [*Saxones videlicet*]—eximia bellicosi Arthuri opera pressisset. Postremo in obsidione Badonici montis fretus imagine Dominice matris, quam armis suis insuerat, nongentos hostium solus adorsus incredibile cæde profligavit.”

cipally cherished, and it was there that the tomb of Gwain (Gwalchmai) son of King Lot of Norway, was discovered in 1087.—“In a Province of Wales called Rhos, the grave of Walwen was found, who was the worthy nephew of Arthur, the son of his sister. He reigned in that part of Wales which is still called Walwertha; a warrior<sup>1</sup> greatly renowned for valour; but being first driven from his kingdom by the brother and nephew of Hengist, of whom I have spoken in the first book, he avenged his exile by much injury to them; adding deservedly to his uncle’s fame, inasmuch as he for many years delayed the fall of his tottering country. But the grave of Arthur is no where to be seen, whence ancient fables feign that he is yet to come.”<sup>2</sup> But a grateful posterity have discovered the tomb of Arthur. The Annals of Margam, which go as far as 1231, state,—“The bones of the renowned Arthur, formerly king of Britain, were discovered in a very ancient sarcophagus; near which stood two pyramids, on which were inscribed some letters; but which, on account of their barbarous and uncouth form, could not be read. The occasion of their being found was this. Whilst some persons were digging the earth between the aforesaid pyramids, in order to bury a certain monk, who had purchased permission to be buried there, they found a sarcophagus, in which they observed what

<sup>1</sup> Probably *Knight* is meant. For a more detailed account of Gwalchmai, see the Mabinogion, by Lady Charlotte Guest.

<sup>2</sup> “In provincia Wallarum quæ Ros vocatur, inventum est sepulchrum Walveni, qui fuit haud degener Arturis ex sorore nepos, regnavitque in ea parte Britannie quæ adhuc Walwertha vocatur; miles virtute nominatissimus, sed a fratre et nepote Hengistii, de quibus in primo libro dixi, regno expulsus, prius multo eorum detrimento exilium compensans suum. Communicans merito laudi avunculi, quod ruentis patriæ casum in plurea annos distulerat. Sed Arthuris sepulcrum nusquam visitur, unde antiquitas nemiarum adhuc eum venturum fabulatur.”

appeared to be the bones of a woman, with the hair still undecayed ; which being removed, they found another laid before the first, in which were the bones of a man ; and having removed that also, they found a third below the other two, upon which was placed a leaden cross, on which was inscribed, ‘Here lies buried the renowned King Arthur in the Island of Avellan.’ For that place, being surrounded by marshes, is called *The Island of Avallon*, that is, the *Island of Apples*; because an apple is called in British *aval*. Then opening this sarcophagus, they found the bones of the aforesaid prince, very large and long, which the monks placed with due honours in a marble tomb within their church [of Glastonbury.] The first grave is said to have been that of Queen Gwenever, the wife of the said Arthur; the second that of Modred his nephew; and the third that of Arthur himself.”<sup>1</sup> This search after the

<sup>1</sup>“*Inventa sunt ossa famosissimi Arthuri quondam regis majoris Brittaniae, in quodam vetustissimo sarcophago recondita, circa quod due pyramides stabant erectae, in quibus literae quædam exaratae sunt, sed ob nimiam barbariem et deformitatem legi non poterant : inventa sunt autem hac occasione, dum inter predictas pyramides terram quidam effoderant, ut quendam monachum sepelirent, qui ut ibi sepeliretur a conventu pretio impetraverat ; reperierunt quoddam sarcophagum, in quo quasi ossa muliebria cum capillitio adhuc incorrupto cernebantur ; quo amoto reperierunt et aliud priori substratum, in quo ossa virilia continebantur, quod etiam amoventes invenerunt et tertium duobus primis subterpositum ; cui crux plumbea superposita erat, in qua exaratum fuerat ‘Hic jacet inclitus Rex Arthurus sepultus in insula Avellana.’ Locus enim ille palubibus inclusus insula *Avallonia* vocatus est, i. e. *insula pomorum*, nam aval Britannice pomum dicitur. Deinde idem sarcophagum aperientes invenerunt predicti principis ossa robusta nimis et longa, quod cum decente honore et magno apparatu in marmoreo mausoleo intra ecclesiam suam [Glaston] monachi collocaverunt. Primum tumulum dicunt fuisse *Guenhaveræ* Reginæ uxoris ejusdem Arthuri ; secundum *Modredi* nepotis ejusdem : tertium predicti principis.”*

relics of the great King continued even to the later period of the Middle Ages. The Waverley Annals (1283) acquaint us that—"In the year 1283 also the crown of the celebrated King Arthur, who was long held in the greatest honour by the Welsh, was together with other precious jewels presented to the King [Edward I.] and thus the glory of the Welsh was, though unwillingly, transferred to the English."<sup>1</sup> It is evident that this presentation of the crown of Arthur to him, who had suppressed the independence of the Welsh Princes, must have been a humiliation to them; and this trait proves how deeply the above tradition of Arthur was rooted in their hearts, and how piously they cherished his memory.

The Monk Alberic des Trois Fontaines, who wrote in the middle of the thirteenth century, does not fail to remark, under the year 1091,—“That mention is made of the grave of *Gauvain*, which was fourteen feet long;” and under the year 1193, “that about this year the body of the great Arthur was discovered in England in the Island of Avallon, where the Abbey of St. Dunstan stands, commonly called St. Peter’s of Glastonbury, in the Diocese of Bath. And this was effected by the industry of a certain monk of the same Church of the New Abbey, who caused the whole cemetery of the place to be diligently searched by excavating; being animated by the words which formerly a monk had heard from the mouth of Henry the father of Richard; and there was found a stone tomb buried deep in the earth, upon which was a leaden plate inscribed with certain lines,—

<sup>1</sup> (Th. Gale, Lib. II. p. 238.)—“Anno 1283 item *corona famosi regis Arthuri*, qui apud *Wallenses* a longo tempore in maximo honore habebatur, cum aliis *jocalibus* pretiosis Domino Regi [Edward I.] est oblata, et sic *Wallensem gloria* ad *Anglicos* licet invite est translata.

'Here lies Arthur, the flower of Kings, the glory  
of sovereignty,  
'Whose honourable life enjoys everlasting fame;  
'Here lies Arthur the King of the Britons, the  
avenger, unavenged.'"<sup>1</sup>

We have not quoted these passages to prove the existence of the Arthur of history, but to show how annalists endeavoured, by every means, to exclude from history the *Nugæ Brittonum*, or Fables of the Britons concerning Arthur. Guillaume le Petit, in the fifth Book of his *Hist. rer. Anglic.* goes so far as to stigmatize Geoffrey of Monmouth as a most impudent liar, and extravagant visionary, who would endeavour to introduce the stories of Arthur, Merlin, Uther Pendragon, and others into authentic history. We wish at the same time to demonstrate, that, down to the thirteenth century, the memory of Arthur, as a National Hero, was most fondly cherished amongst the Welsh; from which it follows, that in the purest and most ancient Traditions, Arthur would be made the great actor and Hero. This is expressly confirmed by the Chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth, which was

<sup>1</sup> "Ad annum 1091 [the discovery of the grave of Gawain] Galvaini, quatuordecim pedes longum; ad ann: 1193, de corpore Arthuri magni dicitur quod circa hunc annum sit inventum in Anglia in insula Avalonis ubi est Abbatia sancti Dunstani Glastonia vulgariter dicta ad sanctum Petrum de Glastemberin, Batoniensis diocesis, et hoc factum est per industriam ejusdem monachi eisdem ecclesiæ novi Abbatis qui totum cimiterium loci diligenter excavando fecit investigari, animatus verbis, quæ olim [adhuc:] monachus audiverat ab ore Henrici, Patris Richardi, et inventa est tumba lapidea in profundo terræ defossa, super quam lamina plumbea quibusdam versibus erat insignata

'Hic jacet Arturus, flos Regum gloria Regni,  
'Quem probitas morum commendat laude perenni;  
'Hic jacet Arturus Britonum rex ultius inultus.'

written after the year 1140.<sup>1</sup> We may presume that this book, *De Origine et gestis regum Britanniae*, is so generally known, that any detailed extracts would be unnecessary. He likewise wrote *Vita Merlini Caledonii; Arturi regis gesta; et Commentaria in Merlini prophetias*; and, although we have not ourselves seen these works, a good idea of them may be formed from the contents of the book first mentioned; throughout which it is apparent, that Geoffrey's principal object was to collect all the ancient traditions of Wales, and that "A certain very ancient book in the British tongue, which in most beautiful language, continuously, and in order, relates the acts of all the kings of the Britons from Brutus, their first king, to Cadwalader, the son of Cadwallon, and which book Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, brought out of Britain,"<sup>2</sup> was not the only book he had in view, but also many others, which he frequently quotes, particularly *Le Brut d'Angleterre* in *Bas Breton*,<sup>3</sup> (nieder bretonische,) written towards the middle of the twelfth century, which he translated into Latin, at the same time that Maister Gasse (Wace, 1155,) translated it into the *Langue d'oui*.<sup>4</sup> Also the Laws of

<sup>1</sup> This is by no means certain, as Henry of Huntingdon states that he had seen the work on the continent as early as the year 1139.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> "Liber quidam Brittanici sermonis vetustissimus qui a Bruto, primo rege Brittonum, usque ad Cadwalladrum, filium Cadvallonis, actus omnium continue et ex ordine per pulchris orationibus proponebat, (L. 1. c. 1.) et quem Gualterius Oxonefordensis Archidiaconus ex Britannia advexit." (L. 12. c. 20.)

<sup>3</sup> Though under the necessity of following the Author in this rendering of the original words, yet the Translator by no means concurs with him in its accuracy, as it is not said that the work alluded to was written in the *Bas Breton*, but in the *British*, [*Britannici sermonis.*] And it is even maintained by some that the word *Britannia* does not refer to *Brittany*, but to *Wales*. The same observation will apply to the word *Breton*, in several other places in this Essay.—Tr.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. de la Bibliotheque du Roi, No. 27.

Dyfriwal Moelmud, (*Leges Mulmutinæ*,) which Gildas is said to have rendered from British into Latin ; King Alfred's in Anglo-Saxon ; and other works, whose contents he does not give, because they are not to be found in Walter of Oxford. The *Prophetia Merlini*, which he introduced in the seventh Book, is a sublime fiction which no doubt existed before his time : It is a perfect Apocalypse, which maintained a high degree of importance even during the Wars of the Roses; and historians refer to it, as to the Prophets of the Holy Scriptures, *Ut impleretur prophetia Merlini*. As Geoffrey's History approaches the time of Arthur, his language, generally dry and simple, becomes spirited, rich, and florid, until his work appears to assume the character of a complete epic poem. The deeds of Arthur himself form the basis of the history ; and although the well known names of Mazadan, Caradoc, Cador, Lot, Vortigern, Uther Pendragon, (i. e. Uter Caput draconis,) Maugantius, and Merlin are mentioned, they belong to secondary and less important personages. Above all, we must remark, that Geoffrey does not mention the institution of the Round Table, as a society of Knights; which leads us to presume, that the *Liber vetustissimus* contained nothing on the subject of the Round Table, although at Chap. 11. of the ninth Book there is an indication of it, where it is said that the renown of Arthur had become so much extended over the world, that all valiant men were armed and dressed in imitation of the Knights (Milites) of King Arthur. Besides the Historians we have quoted, and to whom we might add Leland, (*Assertio Arturii*), and some other writers of that period, there remains to us a much more important source, which gives us not only a description of facts, but (if we may be permitted the expression) a direct reflection of the person of Arthur and his companions, in the wars against the Saxons :—We allude to the ancient poems of Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hêl,

Merddin, &c. &c. Their age and genuineness have been disputed by Pinkerton, in his Preface to Babour, and by others; as Geoffrey of Monmouth has also had his opponents, from Guillaume le Petit down to A. W. Schlegel, in his critique on the “*Mémoire sur l’Origine des Epopées Chevaleresques du Moyen Age*,” and by Fauriel in the *Journal des Débats*, 1833. Nevertheless, those who have read Sharon Turner’s *Vindication of the Genuineness of the Ancient British Poems*,—of Aneurin, &c. (London, 1803,) will be forced to acknowledge that his learned and comprehensive arguments have established for ever the genuineness of these venerable remains of ancient Celtic literature; and yet he has neglected to adduce one proof, which must have confirmed his results, viz. the philological proof, founded upon the character of the language in the different epochs. Aneurin, in his Gododin, conducts us to the unfortunate battle of Cattraeth. From Taliesin we have elegies in honour of the brave combatants,—Urien Rheged, Owain, Uther Pendragon, and others, whom in the later Romances we find as established characters. There we accompany Llywarch Hên to the combat with his host Cynddylan, with Geraint and Cadwallon; we hear the harp of the venerable bard lamenting the fate of his children, slain by the enemy. These bards are at the same time heroes and minstrels; they sing not of past times, but of present deeds; their poems are rather lyrics than epics, their language is without art, but rich and vigorous, and their rhythm, excited by the deeds before them, and imitating the tide of battle, is heroic and inspiring. Their memory was as warmly cherished as that of Arthur by the bards of the ninth century, and Nennius expressly mentions them as “the ancient and illustrious bards;” and speaks also of the heroes whom they celebrated as historical characters. Among others, (besides those we have already named,) is Pantha, who is mentioned by Bede under the name of

Penda, and who re-appears in the Romance of *Lancelot*, in German, by Ulric Von Zazikofer, about 1190, as King Pant; also Riderchhen, the Rodarchus of Geoffrey, and others besides. We perceive in them the germ of the Round Table, which was not established for five centuries afterwards. At the same time we recognise the Arthur of History, not yet invested with the poetic radiance with which posterity surrounded him. They frequently speak of Arthur, calling him as Nennius does *Dux Bellorum*; but they do not exalt him, as in later traditions. Llywarch Hên, who was his companion in arms, and one of his council, does not panegyrisize him in an exaggerated style. In the combat of Llongborth, the bravery of Geraint engrossed the attention of this bard, and the chief, who according to later traditions must have surpassed every other, is scarcely named throughout his long elegy; and, since his poem is an offering paid to the dead, it is natural to suppose that his praises were more fraught with truth than flattery. He speaks of Arthur with veneration, but not admiration; Arthur is simply mentioned as the chief, and leader of the combat, while Geraint is celebrated as worthy of the highest renown. In the same way, in the Afallenau of Merlin, we see Arthur the well known king; but he is not deified, although he was then dead, and all his great deeds of valour and patriotism were achieved. Indeed there is not a single epithet by which we could recognise that whirlwind of battle, who surpassed the whole of Europe in power and wisdom. He was undoubtedly a most brave warrior; but the comparatively moderate praises of the contemporary bards of his own country prove that he was not the wonderful and absolute Mars of British history, before whom all kings and nations bowed in terror. Nennius had already represented him as the prince of warriors, the conqueror without a reverse, and the pilgrim to Jerusalem. This proves that, in the

ninth century, he had been raised from the simple ground of history, on which he originally stood, and had entered the region of fable, where henceforth we must follow him and his companions. But first there remains a very difficult question to propose, if not to solve. *To whom do Arthur and his Warriors owe their poetical resurrection—To the Welsh, or to the Bretons? And why should Arthur be selected above all others?—Was it in Wales, or in Brittany, that he was chosen as the centre of this new creation?*

Tradition is not wafted from country to country, like a light seed at the mercy of the winds. It is a part of the intellectual life of the people to whom it belongs, and could not take root beyond the limits of the material and intellectual power of that people. But the more intimately we study the history of Wales and of Brittany, from the earliest date to the year 1000, the more vain and fruitless does the discussion on the origin of the second period of tradition, down to the eleventh century, appear to us; consequently, all that we can attempt is to throw more light on the epoch, without hoping to arrive at satisfactory results on every point. It is generally admitted that the first inhabitants of Britain were Celts, and that Armorica, the country between the Loire, the Seine, and the sea, was at the time of Julius Cæsar inhabited by Celts, of whom, in Pliny, we find traces as far as the Pyrenees; and that, according to Cæsar and Tacitus, Britain and Armorica were peopled by a kindred race. In the wars against Cæsar, Armorica rejoined the Britons; and Cæsar took the opportunity of passing into Britain, there to forge the first links in the chain of slavery, which that Island was for four hundred years destined to bear. When the Roman legions left the country, the Picts and Scots penetrated into it; and, as early as 383, many of the inhabitants quitted the Island with Maximus, and passed over into Armorica. In 448, the Britons reluctantly solicited the help of the Romans:—

“There is not,” said they, “a place that we can flee to—driven by the barbarians into the sea, and thrown back by the sea among the barbarians, there remains to us but the choice of death from the sword, or from the waves of the sea.” But *Ætius* was too much engaged with *Eocharich*, King of the *Allemani*, and the whole Roman Empire too much occupied by *Attila*, to give ear to their complaints. Fresh bodies fled to *Armorica*, and these emigrations were repeated when the *Anglo-Saxons* entered in 513, and their new country was called by the general name of *Llydaw*, (the coast) which has the same signification as *Armorica*. “Others sought foreign regions—(*Aldhelmus Benedictus*, *Annals of the Kings of the Franks.*)—For when the island of Britain was invaded by the *Angles* and *Saxons*, a great part of the inhabitants crossed the sea, and settled in the extremity of Gaul, in the country of *Vannes* and *Quimper*, in *Armorica*, formerly a district of Gaul, then called *Letavia*, by the *Britons*, by whom it was possessed.”<sup>1</sup>—“A province, formerly called *Armorica*, then *Littau*, and now the *Lesser Brittany*.<sup>2</sup>

The Cornish and Devon names, which the emigrants carried with them to their new country, prove, that they came principally from these parts of Britain. Soon after the *Anglo-Saxons* were established in the island, the yellow plague (*Pestis flava*) made considerable ravages, and oc-

<sup>1</sup> “Alii transmarinas petebant regiones.—*Adelmus Benedictus*, [in the 8th century.] *Añales regum Francorum*.—Nam cum ab Anglis et Saxonibus *Brittanía* insula fuit invasa, magna pars incolarum ejus mare trajiciens, in ultimis Galliæ finibus *Venetorum* et *Corosolitarum* regiones occupavit. [Corpus Francicæ historia veteris p. 366 ed. Hanover, 1613.] (Life of Gildas.)—In *Armoricanam* quondam Galliæ regionem tunc autem a *Brittanis*, a quibus possidebatur *Letavia* dicebatur.” (Bouquet III. p. 449.)

<sup>2</sup> “Provincia quondam *Armorica* deinde *Littau* nunc *Brittania Minor* vocatur.” (Cotton Library, Vesp. A. 14. p. 32.)

casioned fresh emigrations to Armorica ; “ At length the inhabitants, and, especially, certain nobles being compelled by the wide spreading pestilence, as well as the violence of invading enemies, sought other lands. Francanus, the cousin of Cato the British King, with his two sons, Gwerthenor and Iago, and his wife Alba, went into Armorica, where, at that time, perfect tranquility was understood to exist.”<sup>1</sup>

It was therefore most natural, that the remembrance of the last battles of the Britons against the Anglo-Saxons, under Arthur and his warriors, should be preserved in Armorica by the refugees; and it is not surprising, that they should paint the past in glowing and exaggerated colours, since, in the present, they found themselves in all the misery incident to strangers, in an unknown and uninhabited country, deprived of all they had held most dear. Until the ninth century, with the exception of a few notices in the Lives of the Saints, of little value, we have only the account of the Bollandists upon the subsequent intercourse between Armorica and Britain, and particularly Wales ;—from which we learn but little, except the existence of a reciprocity of intellectual influence between the two countries, in consequence of the introduction of Christianity. The Armoricans were compelled to fight against the Franks, as the Cymry fought against the Saxons. The war continued without cessation, but, most frequently, the Armoricans were defeated. The possession of Vannes was disputed by the two nations for two hundred years; in 635 they were defeated by Dagobert ; in

<sup>1</sup> “ Tandem ob pestis late grassantis luem atque etiam irrumpentium hostium vim coacti incolæ ac *præcipue* quidem *nobiles* alienas petivere terras. (Vita Winwaloci actis sanctorum, Martii 256.)

Francanus Catonis regis Britanici consobrinus cum geminis suis natis Guerthenoro et Jacobo cum uxore sua Alba contendit in Armoricam—ubi tunc temporis alta quies vigere putabatur.”

753 by Pepin; Charlemagne sent Count Guy to guard the frontier of Brittany; Louis le Debonaire twice conquered them, and gave them Nominoë as regent, who in 848, made himself king of Brittany and Dôl, and repulsed Charles the Bold in three expeditions; (851) but his son Erispoë yielded, and his brother Solomon entered into alliance with the Franks against the Normans in 857, and received a crown richly ornamented with precious stones as his reward; he was however vanquished in 877 by Pasquitan Count of Vannes, and Gurant Count of Rennes. Alain, the brother of Pasquitan, succeeded at Vannes, and Judichael, the son of Erispoë's daughter, governed Rennes. War broke out between them; but an incursion of the Normans taking place, they made peace: Judichael was killed in 878 by the Normans; Alain afterwards put them to flight, and became the king of all the Bretons. Out of fifteen thousand Normans, only four hundred men were saved after the combat with Alain.—He reigned with glory till 907, and received the surname of Great. But of the sons of Alain, the Chronicle of Nantes says, that “not following the steps of their father, they were altogether lost.”<sup>1</sup>

Mathuidoc, Count of Poher, had married the daughter of Alain. At the beginning of the tenth century, Rollo devastated Brittany:—all resistance was vain. Mathuidoc fled with his family to England; the nobles of Brittany, and all who preferred poverty to the loss of liberty, emigrated with him. King Athelstan received them cordially, and they now took refuge among the Britons, as the latter had at an earlier period passed over to Armorica, when driven out by the Anglo-Saxons. On this occasion Athelstan treated them as friends; he educated young Alan, the son of Mathuidoc, and the daughter of Alain the Great, at his court; Alan repaid his hospitality by a life

<sup>1</sup> “Minime vestigia patris sequentes omnino defecti fuerunt.”

dedicated to valour and honour, and he had scarcely attained the necessary age when he assembled the fugitive Bretons and their descendants, and conducted them into Brittany; they occupied Dôl and St. Brieux, and his presence, and the happy consequences resulting from it, re-animated the patriotism of the Bretons, and gave them a hope of happier times; he drove the Normans from those regions, as well as from the Loire, and received the sceptre of Brittany, as the well merited recompense of his bravery. The Chronicon Nannetense says of him, “He was a powerful man, and an exceeding brave warrior against his enemies; and having chased away the Normans, he possessed the whole of Brittany, including Rennes and Nantes, and also all the country beyond the Loire, the Mauges, the Tiffauges, and the Herbauges.”<sup>1</sup> If we allow that the Welsh nation loved to cherish with the utmost fidelity the remembrance of Arthur and his warriors, and their exploits, we cannot deny that these recollections must also have been cherished in Brittany—The desire to renew the existence of their primitive country on another soil, is proved by the great number of names, which they carried from Wales and other parts of Britain into Brittany—if the Welsh, in their own country, exalted Arthur to the height at which Nennius already found him, decked with the glory of a Saint, and making an expedition to Jerusalem, why should not their kinsmen in Brittany have done the same thing? The Celtic establishment of

<sup>1</sup> “Fuit vir potens ac valde adversus inimicos suos belligerator fortis habens et possidens omnem Brittaniam fugatis inde Normaniis, sibi subditam, et Redonicam, et Namneticum, et etiam trans Ligerim, Medalgitum, Theofalgitum et Herbadilillicum.” (Bouquet, VIII. p. 276.)

The apparent digression upon Alain and Alan, which we have here allowed ourselves, will be justified by our future remarks upon the historical character of these personages, who re-appear in the 12th century, in the fable of the Graal.

bards was always common to the two nations; Turner proves their existence from the seventh to the tenth century, why should they not also have existed in Brittany? And if the bards from inclination cherished and maintained the ancient and patriotic remembrances, and if, with a vivid imagination, they entwined authentic history with these traditions; if, in the seventh century, the Welsh Tales were transported into Brittany, and these stories, altered and remodelled, were carried back to England and Wales, under Mathuidoc in the tenth century, and lastly, if a mixture of the traditions of both Breton and Welsh were again introduced into Brittany, with Alan; who would decide from the obscure sources, a part of which are at present either inaccessible or not yet critically examined, which portion of the traditions of this period belong to Brittany, and which to Wales? Wales possesses a valuable literature, to a portion of which that nation has accorded a high antiquity. On the other hand, the Comte de la Villemarqué has promised us the publication of an important, and of its kind unique series of ancient Breton traditions, which have been preserved upwards of ten centuries, and which still exist in the mouth of the people. Shall we find there also the original source of Geoffrey's history of his Merlin, or of the most ancient French Romances relative to Arthur? In any case there is but one method whereby to resolve these doubts, and to throw light on this obscurity; it is by a most impartial, indefatigable, and searching criticism of all sources, whether Welsh or Breton. It would require a second Jacob Grimm, to construct the historical grammar of the different Celtic dialects particularly of the Cymry and the Bretons, from the earliest period to the nineteenth or at least to the fifteenth century, to enable us to place each document in its true position, and to judge by the language, descriptions of manners, historical facts, arts, and other points indicative of its contents, of the date of each docu-

ment, and place it in its proper situation ; to purify it from the extraneous matter of later interpolations, to reinstate all the noble sentiments, in a word to restore, by the most minute and, at the same time, elevated criticism, sustained by a profound knowledge of every thing relating to those periods, to clear, we say, this literature from the dust of an honourable partiality, from the pedantry of antiquaries, from old errors, and spurious authorities. One other doubt would remain to be resolved, namely, whether, as is commonly believed, the bards exclusively transformed and propagated the traditions of Arthur, or whether, and at what period, and for how long, the princes, clergy, and monks exercised an influence over them, and what class of persons stamped the character of the Mabinogion on these traditions? We see from a passage in Giraldus, in his work *De jure et statu Menev. Eccles.* that the princes attached a high value to ancient traditions. One day when Llewelyn prince of Gwynedd held a full court, "there came forward before all, at the conclusion of the dinner, a certain man of fluent speech, such as those who in the British language are called bards, of whom Lucan says,

‘The bards poured forth many songs.’”

And further Giraldus says, “As long as Wales shall exist, this noble deed shall be related throughout all ages with due celebrity, both in written history and by oral recitation.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Processit in fine prandii coram omnibus vir quidam linguae dicas cuiusmodi lingua britannica sicut et Bardi dicuntur unde Lucanus : ‘Plurima concreti [:securi:] fuderunt [:fudistis:] carmina Bardi.’

—————quod quamdiu Wallia stabit nobile factum hujus et per historias scriptas, et per ora canentium dignis per tempora cuncta laudibus atque efferetur.”

We must infer the same thing from the situation and private authority of the domestic bard, (Bardd Teulu,) of the bard Cadeiriog, and Pencerdd, which were certainly not wanting in the castles of the great. Their political influence may be appreciated, even in later times, by the cruel persecution they suffered under Edward I. Giraldus also proves that the bards of the twelfth century were not merely minstrels, but likewise writers. "This also appears to me worthy of notice, that the Welsh bards and singers or reciters have the genealogy of the above-mentioned princes in their most ancient and authentic books, and that, too, written in Welsh." And in Leland's *Assertio Arthuri*, p. 52. we find,—"As Henry II. King of England, had heard from an ancient British historical singer." William of Malmesbury likewise says, in speaking of Henry II.—"The King also had frequently heard this from their historical singers."<sup>1</sup>

It would be impossible to deny that the monks and ecclesiastics possessed an influence over the traditions, and often gave them a monastic character; it is also true, that in the most ancient bards we find strong contempt expressed for monks, and Merlin says, "I will not receive the sacrament from those long-frocked, detestable monks, let me receive it from God himself." On the other hand we find Gildas the monk bitterly complaining of the princes, who paid more attention to the songs of the bards, than to sacred hymns in honour of Christ; but he also treats the

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc etiam mihi notandum videtur, quod Bardi Cambrenses et cantores, seu recitatores, genealogiam habent prædictorum principum in libris eorum antiquissimis et authenticis, sed etiam Cambrice scriptam."

"Rex anglie Henricus II. sicut ab historico cantore Britone audiverat antiquo."—LELAND ASSERTIO ARTHURI.

"Rex autem hoc ex gestis Britonum et eorum cantoribus historicis frequenter audiverat."

monks as simpletons, and ignorant in all matters of Christian instruction, and only attentive and zealous in listening to stories.<sup>1</sup>

The ancient, but false, derivation of the Britons from Brutus, cannot be of Celtic origin; the ancient bards knew nothing of this species of tradition; in the passages already quoted from Nennius, William of Malmesbury, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, we cannot mistake the pen of the ecclesiastic, and the disposition to surround the head of the national hero with the halo of sanctity; this continued down to modern times, for the greater part of these memorials of Arthur were found in convents.

We must now touch on the second question, less on account of its importance, than in order to avoid any omission. Why was Arthur chosen as the centre of tradition? It appears that King Arthur owes this preference to Merlin. Posterity regarded their character as most important. The remembrance of Merlin was preserved by his Afallenau, in which he pronounced the prophecy, "Arthur will re-appear."

The bards of the sixth century do not overwhelm Arthur with glory and praise, but they name him as the principal chief, and commander general, who headed the expeditions. Do we not see at the present time, that the deeds of inferior warriors are attributed to the commander in chief, and the acts of ministers to the King? Posterity required a centre, around which she could group her recollections of subordinate heroes; the natural centre was the King; and what stronger consolation could be afforded to an oppressed people deprived of their chiefs and heroes, and what more enlivening hope could accompany a fugitive nation in its new country, than that of the prophetic bard? He, the King, will return to reconduct the emigrants to their ancient

<sup>1</sup> King Edward prohibited monks from being rhymers and rameurs, a sufficient proof that they frequently appeared as such.

country, to restore them from their present misery, to their former glory! We find this tradition very generally known in the twelfth century, and considered even then very ancient; William of Malmesbury says, “Arthuris sepulchrum nusquam visitur, unde antiquitas næniarum adhuc eum venturum fabulatur.” Geoffrey of Monmouth gravely mentions this tradition. Alanus ab Insulis relates, towards the end of the twelfth century, that the Breton people would have stoned any one, who dared to deny the fact that Arthur still lived. Johannes Fordun says, “For some of the race of the Britons believe that he shall again live, and restore them from a state of servitude to liberty.”<sup>1</sup> And at the period of the Romances of the Graal, his mysterious immortality was accounted for in this sense, that he was gone to the east, in search of the Graal. Merlin, next to Arthur, was evidently considered of the highest importance in the minds of the people, and it was owing to his gift of prophecy, that so many predictions, poems, and promises were attributed to him. Nennius testifies how highly he was appreciated even in the ninth century, that his birth was shrouded in mystery, and that he appeared as a magician at the building of the tower of Guorthigirnus (Vortigern.) We shall trace the development of this new character in tradition in the following section.

<sup>1</sup> “Credunt enim quidam de genere Britonum, eum futurum vivere, et de servitute ad liberatem eosque reducere.”

## SECOND PERIOD.

ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE.

A. D. 1066 TO 1150.

In the first period, we saw Arthur and his companions in their primitive and historical character, and we have followed them in their transit from history to fable. We must, however, acknowledge, that we have no positive proofs by which we can refute the opinion, that till about the year 1066, these traditions faithfully followed their first direction and national tendency.—This is indeed rather confirmed by Nennius, the Life of Merlin, and the Chronicle of Geoffrey, and it will doubtless be confirmed from Welsh sources; but these appear to be rare, since even the learned Turner complains, more than once, of the scarcity of materials for history from the ninth to the eleventh century. Very different on the other hand are the contents of the French Romances of Erek, Ivain, Percival, Tristan, Arthur, Merlin, &c. none of which in their *present form* are so old as the eleventh century. They are compositions which belong to the twelfth century; but according to their own testimony, the greater part are compiled from more ancient tales, especially Breton: and it is well to observe, that in all their romances, Arthur no longer appears as the fighting hero of the Welsh, but is commonly merely a spectator, the ruler of a wealthy court, the monarch who rewards the exploits of his knights; and also that the deeds of the heroes are no longer directed to patriotic expeditions, but rather to those which concern their own personal glory, and the glory of knighthood in general. Consequently the ancient Welsh national character of these romances is thus obscured, and they indicate a time when another great and general interest had dimmed the pristine lustre of the

first remembrance of Arthur. Tradition does not develope itself by capricious starts, it leaves no intervals; for like the mind of man it does not advance suddenly, but proceeds from one step to another, according to its own laws; we must suppose that there was a period of transformation, during which Arthur began to lose his patriotic importance and his knights to gain a new character: and we are of opinion that this change from the ancient traditions to the numerous romances which we find in France subsequent to the year 1150, was essentially prepared and effected in Brittany. We are far from imagining, that in Wales traditions had ever slept, or had ever been forgotten; but with respect to the complete transformation it underwent in Brittany, and its influence from thence upon French literature, we can bring forward, besides the testimony of Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose Chronicle rests expressly on a book in the Breton<sup>1</sup> language, the evidence of the most ancient romances of the North of France; we refer to the numerous names of persons and places in these romances, which must be sought for in Brittany, and not in Wales; and lastly we shall appeal to the primary ancient sources of Wales, and of Brittany, as far as we have hitherto been enabled to examine them.—Nor shall we omit the testimony afforded by the conclusive reasoning to be found in poetic history. In the Red Book of Hergest, (Llyfr Coch o Hergest,) Peredur comes from the North. Aneurin names Peredur of steel arms, as one of the heroes at the battle of Cattrraeth,<sup>2</sup> and Geoffrey of Monmouth says, in his Vita Merlini, which doubtless was composed from the most ancient traditions, (p. 42.) “Dux Venedotorum Perederus bella gerebat!” Vide Turner’s Vindication, p. 120. I know of no

<sup>1</sup> British. See note p. 18.—TR.

<sup>2</sup> See Lady Charlotte Guest’s Mabinogion, p. 297.

Venedoti in Wales,<sup>1</sup> but there were Veneti who inhabited Vannes, near the bay of Morbihan. The Bretons have appropriated Peredur to themselves.

We now turn to Merlin; he is still the warrior and the historical bard, who abandoning himself to despair, after the lost battle of Arderyth, flies to the forest of Celyddon, where he wanders desolate and alone. This is quite a national metaphor. Geoffrey gives the same description. "He became a wild man, frequenting the wood, where he long continued lost and forgotten of his friends, delighting in the woods and leading a savage life."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Venedoti* are the people of *North Wales*. They are mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth as acting in conjunction with the *Demeti*, or people of South Wales, and the other British tribes. "Ad edictum itaque ipsius venerunt Demeti, Venedoti, Deiri, et Albani, et quicunque ex genere Britonum fuerant." The name of *Venedotia* is repeatedly used by Giraldus Cambrensis, and distinctly explained to signify *North Wales*. "Divisa est antiquitus Wallia in tres partes—Venedotiam scilicet, quæ nunc Nordwallia, id est, Borealis Wallia dicitur, &c."—"Totius autem Wallie sicut australis pars circa Cereticam, &c.—sic borealis Venedotia, et situ terrarum munitior, &c." And this is again confirmed by the site of the district of *Tegengl*, which is stated to be in Venedotia, and to have been under the government of the Prince David ap Owen. "Tegengl est nomen provincie apud Venedotiam, cui dominabatur David Oeni filius." Indeed, the name is similarly explained by *Alanus de Insulis*, in his exposition of the prophecy of Merlin; for having referred to the original words "Venedotia rubebit materno sanguine," he says that the name applies to a province of Wales, and that the prophecy was fulfilled in the war of the Welsh against King Henry. "Venedocia quædam Cambriae, id est Walie, provincia est, Synechdochicos ergo significat bellum quod Venedoci, hoc est Wallenses Henrico regi intulerunt."—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> "Fuit sylvester homo, quasi silvis deditus esset  
Inde per æstatem totam, nullique repertus  
Oblitusque sui cognatorumque suorum  
Delituit silvis, obductus more ferino."

The Bretons went still further; with them his mysterious disappearance in the forest became the result of the enchantments of Viviane, who had learned the art from Merlin himself, and of which Nennius also appeared to be aware. The whole of his history is connected with the celebrated forest of Breceliande, and its still more celebrated fountain of Baranton in Brittany. The Mabinogi of Iarlles y Ffynawn, in the *Llyfr Coch o Hergest*, does not even name this fountain. In later poems, Owain, the warrior of history, and the companion of Arthur, becomes a complete Breton, so much so that the author of the *Roman de Rou*, (v. 11514 to 11539,) cannot forgive himself, for having been so much deluded by the fable of the fountain as to make a pilgrimage to it.

“ La alai jo merveilles querre,  
Vis la forest è vis la terre ;  
Merveilles quis, mais nes' trovai ;  
Fol m'en revins, fol i alai,  
Fol i alai, fol m'en revins,  
Folie quis, por fol me tins.”

A more modern poet, Huon de Mery, was, it is true, more fortunate, and the Comte de la Villemarqué, has recently discovered certain ancient traditions in that neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now return to history.—Whilst Wales, from the time of Athelstan, became tributary to the Anglo-Saxon kings,—frequently revolting against them, obtaining slight victories, and receiving serious defeats; whilst Griffith, king of South Wales, devastated great part of Herefordshire in 1052, and in the time of Edward the Confessor massacred the people, and ravaged the country, until, in 1063, he lost all his advantages, through the vengeance of

<sup>1</sup> See *Mabinogion*, by Lady Charlotte Guest.

Harold and Tosty, who drove him out, destroyed his vessels and his castles, and carried away hostages, having exacted a heavy tribute; Brittany in the meantime remained at rest, enjoying peace from the time of Alan, the descendant of Alan the Great, and began to develop its internal power. The troubles from the death of Alan to Conan, the first Count of Rennes, soon ended, when the latter had set aside the pretensions of Alan's natural sons, Hoel and Guerich. Godfrey I. succeeded him, until 1008: Alan II. reigned till 1040: Conan II. till 1067: and Brittany was an undivided, independent, and respected state. The period of continual struggles for existence, of family dissensions, and civil war, had passed, their constitution was modified according to the feudal system of the Franks, and they began to take part in the more advanced civilization of their neighbours;—while the two nations were not divided by the furious and implacable hatred, which many of the Welsh bards breathe against the Normans and Saxons. Great political movements always occasion a reaction in the development of the minds of the people, and give them a fresh impulse. Such was the expedition of the Normans against England. When William the Conqueror assembled his warriors to cross over to England, the Bretons did not object to accompany him. “He also collected an immense army from amongst the Normans, Flemings, French, and Bretons.” “For the French and Bretons, the Poitevins and Burgundians, and other Cisalpine people flocked to the transmarine war.”<sup>1</sup> The imagination of the chiefs must doubtless have been excited by the idea of undertaking an avenging expedition against the descendants of those who

<sup>1</sup> “Ingentem quoque exercitum et Normaniis, Flandrensis, ac Francis et Britonibus aggregavit. [W. Géméensis, 286.] Galli namque et Britones, Pictavini et Burgundiones, aliique populi Cisalpini ad bellum transmarinum convolarunt.” [Ordericus Vitalis, 494.]

had opposed Arthur; but their ambition was more influenced by the desire of rivalling foreign princes in valour and heroism, of shining in victories, and equalling their allies in civilization and virtue. The conquest of England took place in the reign of Conant II. and the prophecy of Merlin, according to Geoffrey, is as follows:—"The Bretons shall, through weakness, for many years lose their kingdom, until *Conan* shall come in his car from Armorica, and Cadwalader the honoured leader of the Welsh."<sup>1</sup> It would, in fact, be astonishing, if this prophecy in the life of Merlin were written before 1066: Conan cannot be the Conan Meriadoc of Geoffrey's Chronicle, which this writer places before the incursion of Hengist and Horsa in England, nor can he be the Aurelius Conanus, who slew Constantine, and who is a person of small importance. The passage in the Afallenau of Merlin, which Geoffrey here imitates, says nothing of Conan's (Cynan) being expected from Armorica with succours. It would be extraordinary if tradition had not appropriated to itself a historical name that still existed in the memory of the people at a time which seemed (*mutatis mutandis*) to accomplish the ancient prophecy.

The Bretons triumphed with the Normans, and no time could have appeared more fit for representing Arthur as the great conqueror of the world. Some learned men, and among them A. W. Schlegel, assert, that it was a spirit of revenge against their oppressors that prompted the Welsh to represent Arthur as the conqueror of the world, and a king among kings. But it would have been a ridiculous revenge, which must have still more humiliated the existing generation, who, conquered and oppressed, but too well

<sup>1</sup> " Britones ut nobile regnum  
Temporibus multis amittant debilitate  
Donec ab *Armorico*, veniet temone *Conanus*  
Et Cadwaladrus Cambrorum dux venerandus, &c."

knew, that they could not in reality celebrate these fictitious triumphs. The period had now arrived, when the Bretons for the first time were able to look beyond the narrow limits of their territory, when they rushed upon victory, with a mighty host, to whom they had hitherto been strangers, and felt the first impulse of a dawning chivalry. It was the time when a vast and novel sentiment, penetrating the genius of past ages, transplanted Arthur the celebrated hero into a new and hitherto unknown world, which opened to his warriors a new field for their exploits, and gave to those exploits a different character to that which they had previously possessed : in fact we find in the Chronicle of Geoffrey, where he speaks of Arthur, Genu-mara and Modred, almost all the elements, though but slightly touched upon, which soon after appear in the romances ; we already feel the spirit of rising chivalry bursting forth, although it still partakes of the rudeness of past ages.

It is natural that the conquest of England should rouse anew the national spirit of Wales,—that the triumph of the Bretons should not be without its influence on their countrymen, and that they should listen with greater attention to the *Cantoribus historicis Brittanicis*, which now began to celebrate Arthur in another style ; but it is also certain that Wales did not abandon herself to her new masters, but on the contrary continued opposed to them. The language of the Welsh was strange and disagreeable to the Normans, they always called it barbarous ; the Welsh were never very communicative to strangers, and we now deeply lament the patriotic pride of the writers of that day, who obstinately persisted in only making use of the difficult language of their country, and thus were themselves the authors of the obscurity which still veils a large portion of their literature ; while Gildas, Bede, Nennius, and others, who wrote in Latin, became the study and delight of all.

We have no authentic documents to prove that Welsh literature had been diffused throughout England earlier than the twelfth century.

In returning to the French romances, we must again first distinguish between the romances of the twelfth century, in which we can still recognise the primitive Welsh and Breton elements, and those trivial and more recent works, which, mingling the traditions of Arthur with the Fable of the Sangraal, formed with these materials a sort of literary tower of Babel.

We reckon the following among the most ancient of the principal Romances :—

1. The first part of the *English Romance of Merlin*.
2. The *Tales of Arthur*, related in the Chronicle of Geoffrey, and which describe his own particular exploits; they were much amplified in the second and more modern part of Merlin, and in the *Morte d'Arthur*.
3. The *English Tristan* of Thomas Brittanicus,<sup>1</sup> from which Godfrey of Strasbourg, (about 1217) composed his German poem of *Tristan und Isolde*; and the *French Tristan*, which was the model of the work composed by Eilhart von Stolbergen about 1180 or 1190.
4. *Iwain*, the *Chevalier au Lion*, which was composed in French about 1180, by Chrestien de Troyes, and about 1200 in German by Hartmann von Aue, from Welsh allegories. (nach Wälschen Verbildern ditchteten.)
5. The English *Lancelot du Lac*, communicated by Hugo de Morville, who was imprisoned with Richard Cœur de Lion, at Vienna, to Ulric von Zatzikofen, a German.

<sup>1</sup> This Thomas cannot be the same with Thomas of Ercildoune, if Sir Walter Scott is correct in asserting that the latter was born in 1220, and died between 1286 and 1289.

6. The *Welsh Geraint*, (Erek,) see the Mabinogion, by Lady Charlotte Guest, which was probably put into French by Chrestien de Troyes, and (about 1200) into German, by Hartmann von Aue.
7. *Peredur*, the *Percival* of the French, who became the hero of several Romances, and whom we again see in his purely Welsh character, in the Mabinogion, lately published, by Lady Charlotte Guest.

In all these romances, we find the heroes represented as warrior-adventurers assembled round Arthur, either in his suite, or as his vassals. Invincible courage in battle, an unwearying desire to fight, an insatiable passion for the most extraordinary adventures, an inordinate ambition, love in its most engaging aspect, an unequalled splendour, the most refined courtesy and gallantry, the Service des Dames, in the most whimsical and refined form, mingled with the deepest devotedness.—Such are the characteristic traits of these romances, as they are those also of the most perfect and brilliant chivalry in general.

None of these compositions are older than 1150, but all, as we have already said, refer to more ancient traditions; therefore feudal and chivalric institutions must have been mentioned in such traditions. Now, it is true, that a sort of rude and scarcely defined feudalism existed in England during the latter part of the heptarchy, and until 1066, as it did in France and Germany, under Charlemagne and his successors; but it nevertheless appears, that the introduction of a regulated and legal feudal system into England, must be attributed to William the Conqueror, who likewise introduced the true spirit of chivalry with his numerous followers. It is for this reason that we are inclined to deny a higher antiquity than 1066 to all those poetical compositions of the Welsh, which breathe this spirit, notwithstanding certain names and passages which might belong to an earlier period.

In Provence, during a peace of nearly two centuries, which was never interrupted by the wars in the rest of Europe, where a wise administration, the intellectual habit of life of the people, and great affluence were not disturbed by hostile incursions, but strengthened and encouraged by commerce, a bright sky, and a fertile soil,—there, we maintain, that laws, manners, language, and every branch of civilization, must have expanded and prospered.

Poetry attained its highest perfection at the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century. It sung of war, adventures, religion, and love. Chivalry arose and obtained its proper character in the Provençal poetry. Chivalry was the ideal of poetry, and in real life, feudalism corresponded with it, and was dignified by it.

This Provençal spirit soon communicated itself to the North of France, and the first Crusade, which emanated principally from Provence, drew with it the inhabitants of the North of France. The Normans had not lost, in their new country, that ancient love of adventure which had conducted their ancestors to the shores of England, France, Spain, Italy, and Sicily, even to the heart of Russia and Constantinople; they had not abandoned their love of heroic tales; but they forgot their ancient pagan fables, and their Scandinavian and Germanic traditions, and turned, with avidity, under the serene sky of France, to the Frankish tales of Roland, Formun, and others. The Romance of Rollo does not yield in antiquity to the oldest romances of the North of France. These most ancient traditions of Wales and Brittany, which, after 1066, the Cantores Historici carried to them, (bringing them, no doubt, in greater number, in consequence of finding an attentive and admiring public,) here found a fertile and well prepared soil, in which they would easily take root. The chief character of Provençal poetry was lyric, and although the epic was not unknown to them, (as Mr. Paris asserts in the preface to

the first volume of his *Garin de Loherain*, contrary to M. Fauriel, *Sur l'origine des épopées chevaleresques du moyen âge,*) it is however certain, that the epic did not prevail in Provence ; but, like the people of the North of France, *the Provençals seized with avidity on the Welsh and Breton traditions, they possessed themselves of them as valuable and full of interest, imparting to them, however, a new character according to their own peculiar nationality,—a character which had hitherto been foreign to them, viz. the spirit of French chivalry.* In this manner Arthur, the champion of Wales against the Saxons, was transformed into the brilliant representative of every chivalrous virtue ; his court became the seat of the most luxurious, distinguished, and chivalrous life, and the heroes of his round table, the faultless models of courtesy and gallantry.

It may here be asked, Why, when the Provençal lyric poetry was abandoned for the epic, a foreigner, as Arthur was, should have become the nucleus of this poetry instead of their own national hero, Charlemagne ? For in fact a royal centre of this kind was necessary for the épopée of chivalry, because the knights, thirsting after deeds of valour, as much required a king and master who would accord them the crown of glory, and feudal privileges, as adventures to enable them to merit that glory. Kings and princes were the supports of chivalry, and representing it in the most brilliant and perfect form.

It is true that Charlemagne was as much the object of national poems, among the Franks in the tenth century, as Arthur was in Wales, and in the eleventh century the traditions concerning him were continually extending ; we will only mention the Tales of Roland, of the sons of Haincos, of Bertha au Gros Pied, of Guillaume au court Nez, &c. where the poets overwhelm him and his paladins with all the glory and splendour of chivalry ; but, according to an ancient and unchanging tradition, Charlemagne lived.

for ever in their memories as the patron of Christianity,—the invincible barrier against the assault of Paganism. It is on this account, that the romances which represented him fighting against the pagans, could not assign him any other place than that which tradition had already accorded him. Tradition in that case would have been its own destroyer. This would have been an easier task for those romancers who described his expeditions against his vassals; but there also, tradition rested upon historical and unvarying foundation, and following its general purport did not yield to the tendency, which had become general, of *making the description of chivalry in itself the object of the epic*, and creating for it an ideal world of its own. It was on this account that poets abandoned themselves so easily to another circle of traditions entirely new to them, and which, because it was new, was the fitter for that transformation, which could not originate in Wales, for the same reason that prevented the French from altering the traditions of Charlemagne. Still less could the Norman-Franks receive the Saxon poetry which they met with in England. The ancient poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, took its origin in the Scandinavian and German Mythology. This is proved by Beowulf, the Battle of Finnsburg, Cædmon, the Traveller's Song, and other fragments of ancient poetry which are still extant. The different bodies of emigrants from the North, from Norway, Denmark, and Friesland, did not carry to England a complete and national history, but merely separate traditions of different colonies and families. The more modern poetry of the Anglo-Saxons partly revived their ancient poems, mingling with them the elements of Christianity, and partly selected the deeds of their kings, as the object of *historical poems*; we cite the Battle of Brunabourgh, (p. 937.) the poems on king Athelstan, of which William of Malmesbury gives many fragments, and the exploits of Beorthnoth, who fell in battle against the Danes.

990. But under William the Conqueror, the people were animated with a new spirit, which became dominant under their new rulers. The heroic songs of a people who were now subjugated could not satisfy, especially as they recalled the memory of Paganism.

We have already mentioned why these times and circumstances were favourable to Breton Minstrels and Raconteurs, enabling them to throw a new splendour over Arthur, and to present him in this guise to the allied Normans. The Celtic imagination, which could only be compared to that of the East, awed the Normans and French, who listened with admiration, as Giraldus, and Geoffrey, have proved by translations from British books. Henry II. one of England's most powerful kings, (1154—1189,) was the son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, and Matilda, daughter of Henry I. His eminent talents early displayed themselves under the excellent guidance of the wise and learned Robert of Gloucester, whom Geoffrey in his Chronicle terms his protector. He became Duke of Normandy, and at the death of his father, Count of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine. He married the celebrated Eleanor of France, who after having been repudiated by Louis le Jeune, (1151,) brought him the sovereignty of Guienne, Poitou, and Saintonge. She was grand-daughter of William IX. of Poitou, Duke of Aquitaine, who was equally celebrated as a poet and a warrior, (1071—1127.) This acquisition of a great part of France, and especially of the countries where the Langue d'oc (or Provençal) was spoken, would necessarily have the greatest influence not only over the manners, tastes, and opinions of the nobility and knighthood of the united countries, mingling the tribes and uniting their poets and minstrels at the English court, but it would naturally attach the separate interests of the kings of England and France to the cause of literature. If Henry and his court delighted in hearing the tales of Arthur,

would not the French and Provençal poets make themselves masters of these tales ? Henry liberally rewarded such efforts, and he gave Robert Wace a prebendal stall in the Cathedral of Bayeux, for the dedication of his Roman du Rou. Geoffrey of Monmouth also eulogizes the young prince in his Chronicle. Other poets addressed him in a still more flattering strain. It can be proved, that, in order to please Irmengart, who was so celebrated in Provençal poetry, and whose court was frequented by the most celebrated Troubadours of the twelfth century, the heroes in Guillaume au court Nez were placed in very palpable relation with Aymeric I. Vicomte de Narbonne, who in 1103 or 1104 visited the holy land, and died soon after, as well as Aymeric II. the father of Irmengart, who was killed in 1134, in Catalonia, in the bloody battle of Fraga, (Fauriel, &c.)

The traditions of Wales were treated in a similar manner. In the German Romance of Percival, by Wolfran von Eschenbach, which rests on a poem by Kiot the Provençal, written before that of Chrestien de Troyes, the hero is always called a Waleisin, (native of Wales,) proving that the origin of this personage must be sought for in that country; but he makes him at the same time prince of Anjou, and the battles of his father Gamaret against the pagans, so fully described, and the care which he takes to unite the Anjou family to the royal family of Sangraal, have no other end than to exalt the house of Anjou. But when these interests of the time had disappeared, these allusions disappeared also, and we discover no trace of them in the later romances by Chrestien de Troyes and his four continuators.

Fauriel mentions nearly twenty five Troubadours who allude to Tristan, of whom about ten belong to the latter half of the twelfth century ; he has found several others, of the same period, who mention some very remarkable scenes which belong to the German Percival. In short, if we remember what bands of Minstrels, Troubadours, Jongleurs,

&c. &c. carried the favorite Tales, which they borrowed from the equally numerous Bards of Brittany and Wales, from château to château, and from house to house, and that the nobles equally cultivated poetry, that almost every nobleman maintained a learned clerk to write down interesting tales,<sup>1</sup>—that these clerks or scholars zealously collected and arranged these tales, and affected, to the great grief of the Troubadours, to be the sole possessors of the true history in their compilations,—and that they composed such works for their own profit,<sup>2</sup>—we shall, thus,

<sup>1</sup> Leland, quoting Giraldus, (*Assert. Arturi*, p. 52,) says, “As Henry II. King of England had heard from an ancient British historical singer.”

William of Malmesbury, v. Gale III. p. 295. “The King Henry II. had also frequently heard this out of the Acts of the Britons, and from their historical singers.”

Usher’s Giraldus. *Epis. Hiberniarum Sylloge*, p. 116. “His prophecies are orally preserved among very many of the British bards, but in writing among few.”

<sup>2</sup> Wace, in the *Roman du Rou*, complains that Henry III. had not given him the reward promised him by Henry II. at the conclusion of the poem.

Viel gutes der König mir erwies,  
Gab viel, obwohl er mehr verhiess,  
Wenn das, was er versprach geschehen  
So durft er besser um mich stehn;  
Richts hab ich, weils ihm nicht gefiel,  
So bliebt denn auch bei mir nicht viel.

Much favor the King did shew,  
Gave much, but promised more ;  
If what he promised had happened,  
I should have thought better of him ;  
Nothing have I, because it did not please him,  
So that little remains to me.

At the commencement of the work he greatly praises the Clerks, who write down illustrious achievements, as it is through them alone that the remembrance of them can be handed down to posterity.— Such was the case in the year 1150.

comprehend why in the middle of the twelfth century we see a deluge of romantic poetry spread itself at once over England, and Northern and Southern France, in the different languages of each country, forming the second class of Traditions of Arthur, and flourishing in every civilized country of Europe, until the downfal of chivalry.

### THIRD PERIOD.

#### ARTHUR AND THE SANGRAAL, A. D. 1150 TO 1500.

THE Fable of the Sangraal was not less fertile in producing romances in the twelfth century than the traditions of Arthur and his Round Table.<sup>1</sup> The purport is frequently

<sup>1</sup> The Round Table is neither mentioned by the ancient bards, nor by Nennius, nor in Geoffrey's Chronicle. This is worthy of notice. As far as my knowledge carries me, its institution is first noticed in the Brut d'Angleterre, which Robert Wace (1150) rendered into 18000 octosyllabic verses, after a Latin translation by Geoffrey of Monmouth from a Breton book. The first book contains the origin of the Round Table, its feasts, tournaments, and knights. It was publicly read at the English Court. We do not here quite rely on the veracity of Geoffrey. Wales and Brittany certainly must have known of the royal and princely table, with its places of honor, concerning which the Laws of Howel Dda contain much, (Turner's Vindication, p. 95, 96.) and that is the historical origin of the Round Table; but the account of the Brut cannot be older than knighthood, or chivalry itself; nay, it even presupposes it already in a flourishing state, which it was in those countries about 1100, or, at the earliest, at the end of the eleventh century;—certainly not before 1066.

the same in many respects, but the character of the Romances of the Graal is nevertheless very different, and the question now is, *Whether the Fable of the Graal is also of Welsh origin, or not?*

We do not know how this question has been considered in England ; the Germans, and the French, generally, have not taken much trouble to resolve it, and have lightly supposed that this fable belonged to that of Arthur. The confusion which has resulted from this supposition is the less excusable in Germany, as they had long been in possession of the precise sources it would be necessary to examine. It is only of late that Gerovius (History of the National Literature of the Germans) and Rosencrantz (History of German Poetry) have pointed out the truth, though rather as a conjecture than a certainty. The sources are, the German Poem of *Percival*, written by Wolfran von Eschenbach, 1205, and the *Titurel* of Albrecht, finished in 1350. Both, according to their own testimony, refer to a common origin, viz. a poem in the northern French dialect, written by the Provençal Kiot,<sup>1</sup> which is otherwise unknown.

Kiot, der meister wiß	Kyot, the wise master
Diz māre (bon S. Gral) begunde	Of this story (S. Graal) set
suochen	about to search
In latinischen buochēn,	In Latin books,
Wa gewesen waere	Where could have been
Ein volk da zuo gebaere	A people of such qualifications
Daz ej des Grales jesläge	Who might ever have the custody of the Graal, [mind;
Unt der Kusche sich bewaege;	And who inclined to purity of
Er las der lande chronicā,	He read the <i>Chronicles of the countries</i> ,

<sup>1</sup> Guiot de Provence belonged to a later period, and must not be confounded with our Kiot.

Ze Britane unt anderswa,	In Brittany and elsewhere,
Ze Frankreiche (Rord frankreich)	In France, (Northern France,)
unt Irlant;	and in Ireland
Ze Anschouwe er diu maere vant	In Anjou he found the story ;
Er las von Mazadane	He read of Mazadan,
Mit warheit sunder wane;	With truth without deceit ;
Umb alles sie geslachte	About all his family
Gtaont da geschriben rehte;	Stand these rightly written.
Unt anderhalp, wie Titurel	And on the other hand, how <i>Titurel</i>
Unt des sun Friamtel	And his son Friamtel
Den Gral bracht uf Amfortas	Brought the Graal to Amfortas,
Des swester Herzeloide was,	Whose sister was Herzeloide,
Bi der Gamuret ein Kint (der Percival)	By whom Gamuret a child
Gewan, des disiu maere sint.	Had, after whom this story is named.

This testimony, which the German poets could only have found in the French poem, is important, as proving that the Fable of the Graal did not exist in the Chronicles of those countries which preserved the traditions of Arthur, (Britain, France, and Ireland.) The common observation that traditions are most diffused by Latin translations, such as the British tales by Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Carlovingian tales by Turpin, the romances of the Cid (1207,) and again the Carlovingian traditions through the Chronicles of St. Denis, compiled by order of the Abbé Suger, minister to Louis le Jeune, (1137—1180,) leads us to presume, that the Fable of the Graal was made known through such Latin compilations, and we cannot be very far from the truth if we suppose such a translation in the middle of the twelfth century, when the Provençal disappeared as a written language, and the Latin was em-

ployed as the medium of communication with England, France, and Provence, and became at the same time the common language of the learned. Now, Robert, and after him Helis de Boron, say expressly in their romance of the San Graal, (Vatic. MSS. 1687, fol. 66.) Mess. Robt. de Boron chi cheste estore translata *de Latin en Romance* par le commendement de St. Eglise.

This is repeated in the French romance of the Sangraal in prose, (Paris, 1523,) and the passage (fol. 40, Vol. 2. of the MSS. de l'Eglise de Paris, No. 7,) which is quoted by Rochefort (Glossaire de la langue Romaine.—V. Sangraal) is almost word for word the same with the printed prose Romance fol. 50. These prose romances do in general follow the ancient poems very faithfully. The reasons why the poem of Boron, as well as his Lancelot, differ so essentially in some points from the German Percival and Titurel, will be explained as we proceed; for he dedicates Lancelot to King Henry III. of England, and Roquefort and Faurel are consequently right in placing it between 1227 and 1271, although the authors of the Histoire Littéraire de France, (Tom. 15, p. 495,) without any reason place them as far back as Henry II.; it was therefore written at a time when Chrestien had already changed the tradition. Still we cannot suppose that the incentive to latin books could be entirely fictitious. But, according to Wolfran, Kiot had, besides the Chronicle of Anjou before named, another work before him which had been discovered at Toledo, in pagan writing, by a half Jew and astrologer, Flegetanis, and which related to the History of the Graal in a short and very unsatisfactory manner. We are thus led into Spain, to an Arabian MS. and it does not appear more impossible that we should find the Fable of the Graal in Arabic, than to find the Bible translated into that language for the benefit of those who understood Arabic better than Spanish. We pass over all the derivations, frequently so childish, of the word *Graal*, and

the interpretations of that miraculous Vase, which by some has been connected with the Heliotrapezon of the Ethiopians, which is again found in the Indian Vajapura, and by others with the black stone of Mecca, or with the Cratera of the Egyptian Hermes, the Cratera of Djemjid, or with the cavern of the wise men in the mountain of Raken, &c. &c. without gaining any certain results. If we were to allow that the MS. of Kiot at Toledo is an entire fiction, yet we can still point out with certainty a connexion between this Fable and Spain, and also between the Arab poetry, which flourished there, and Provence. We find this connexion in the Arabic names of the planets, the Arab word Sennabor, (Sember a wise Man,) the Persian names Sabbilor, Azubar of the Catholico de Ranculat, (Catholicus len Nestorien,) the Indian figures of Cundric the sorceress, and Malcreature, born through the influence of venomous roots and malignant stars; then the Provençal words Monsalvage, Floramic, Albaflori Flordicale, Graswaldanek, (Valley of Graisevandan near Grenoble,) Titurel, Frineutel, Tschoinatulander, &c. &c. and, above all, the localities, which always and in every country indicate the original scene of a Fable. The forest of the Graal (*terre de salvage*) is in the north of Spain; Catalonia, Arragon, Toledo, Seville, and the shores of Africa are, for a long time, the scenes of the tales, countries which are entirely unknown to the traditions anterior to Arthur. Titurel says,—“Whoever has travelled in Gallica, knows St. Salvador and Salvaterre.” The family of Percival, and of his relations Herzeleide, Orilus, Gurnemanz, and Sigune live in Auvergne, the Landes, Gascony, and Anjou. Parille received, as a reward, the kingdom of France, and his brother had Anjou. But here, as elsewhere, political history mingles itself with fable. The house of Burgundy, which reigned over Provence, became extinct with Gillibert, who divided his kingdom between his two daughters;

Faidide married Alphonso, Count of Toulouse ; the other, Douce, married Raimond Berenger, Count of Barcelona. The conquest of Toledo in 1085 was of the greatest importance in uniting the South of France with Spain, and in making known the manners of the Saracens. Spaniards, French, the men of Provence and of Gascony, fought together under the Cid. Toledo was the principal seat of art and Arabic literature, and the knights from beyond the Pyrenees found themselves under the necessity of living at the Court of Alphonso VI. with men whose imagination, mind, and taste had been developed among the Saracens. We find in history the same separate expeditions against the Moors as those of Gamuret against the pagans, in Percival, and the same tolerance towards paganism in Spain as in the poem ;—the same small Spanish kingdoms, in history, about the year 1100, as those described by the poet. Saragossa remained a pagan state until 1112, although surrounded by Christian princes. In Titurel, Titurisoné of France marries Elizabeth of Arragon ; as in history, Faidide marries Alphonso, and Douce marries Raimond Berenger. Titurel applies to the Provençals, the Carolingians, the people of Arles, and Duke Charles of Lorraine, for aid against the pagans in Averre and Navarre ; in the poem we see an imitation of it, in the Crusade against Toledo. The connexion between history and poetry would be still more apparent, if time and space would permit us to make some extracts from the German poets, and no doubt would remain that these tales were much repeated and sung in Provence about the year 1100 ; Provence was devoted to poetry, and powerfully influenced by Spain and the East. We must place at the same period the developement of the Fable of the Graal, which we denominate the *primitive Fable of Provence*, in opposition to the change which it afterwards underwent in the North of France ; and this change evinces so much connexion with the Order of

Templars, that it must have taken place after the institution of that body. It is therefore not so important to elucidate its first obscure origin. The French Knights, Hugo de Payens, Godfrey de St. Omer, Roral, Godfrey Bisol, Payens de Mt<sup>t</sup>. Didier, Archibald de St. Amand, Andreas de Mt<sup>t</sup>. Barry, Gundamar, and Hugo Count of Provence, were the founders of this order in 1118. If at that time the rank of a Temporal Knight was regarded as the height of all honor and glory, if each Knight appeared to be the natural defender of religion, the protector of all the suffering and oppressed who solicited his aid, how much more to be venerated would the *Knight-Monk*, the Chevalier of Christ, the *Miles Templi* appear in the eyes of men, who looked upon both the Knight and the Monk as following the most holy and the most enviable vocation. The Knights Templars increased prodigiously in number over the whole of Europe, but more especially in the South of France, where their possessions greatly augmented. The Templars first gave to the world the example of a noble and purely christian employment of chivalry, united to a complete self-devotion for the benefit of Christianity. Raised on the wings of enthusiastic faith, and animated by the breath of the crusades, poetry found in the conception of this order a rich and wide field; and all that had ever been dreamed of or imagined of the Graal, the Crateræ, the Vases, and precious stones, or, in short, every species of treasure which the Angels of heaven had confided to the care of men, all that had the power of satisfying every wish in this world, and of creating a paradise on earth, acquired thenceforth a fixed and condensed form in the chivalry of the Graal, as we find it preserved in the poems of Percival and Titurel; and it is only from this time we can date the authentic history of our fiction.

We regret that we cannot here enter into details to prove the intimate connexion which existed between the Knights

of the Graal and the Templars, who soon found numerous imitators in Spain, even in exterior forms; for example, in the architecture of their circular temple, in their ceremony of Baptism and the Holy Supper, in their manner of life and vocation, and in all the rules of their order, even in their name (Tempeleisin, Templiers.) We will only mention that the general purport of these two poems may be divided into two principal parts; first, the exploits of the Knights of the Round Table, who take a secondary station, and form, as it were, the back ground of the picture; and secondly, the Kingdom and Knighthood of the Graal. The independent manner in which these two groups proceed proves that they have been united at a later period, and did not originate in a common source. The *second* group, whose centre is the Graal, constitutes the Provençal and Spanish element; the *first* is the Welsh;— and *the point of union is the chief hero Percival, the Peredur of the Welsh.* The genealogy we have affixed (TABLE I.) will give a clear idea of its manner.

We must here observe first, that until the middle of the twelfth century, not the slightest trace of the Graal, or anything resembling it, can be found in the Breton or Welsh poems; secondly, that towards the same period we discover, in the French poems only, the first indications of any knowledge of the traditions of Arthur; and thirdly, that this branch of poetry received a particular impulse from the sovereignty of England over a great part of France; and we must be deceived upon every point, if Arthur and the Sangraal did not first meet half way in France about 1150, coming from the North and from the South. The date of the compilation of the Peredur of the Welsh, given in the Second Number of Lady C. Guest's Mabinogion, does not, it is true, appear to us much more ancient than that of the MS. (14th century,) but we have no ground for denying that the character of Peredur is as ancient as Owain,

TABLE I.

TESTE POEMATE "PERCIVAL" WOLFRANI VON ESCHENBACH.

GENUS PARCIVALIS.	GENUS ARTURI.	
	MAZADAN.	
Lassaiess. Addanz.	Gandin.	Brickus. Uterpandragon, (uxor Arnide.)
		Lot, (uxor Sangire.)
		Gwean, Ilo- (Gwalch- mai.)
	Lamire, (ma- ritius Ither de Gaherivess.)	Kundrie la belle.
	Kingrisin, (uxor Fleur d'amour.)	Beau- corps.
	Galo- ës. (uxores, <sup>1</sup> Belacane <sup>2</sup> Herzelleide.)	Sirdamour, (maritus Alexander.)
Vergulat. Loherangrin.	Antonie. Kardeiss.	Arthur, (uxor Ginevra.)
		Ili- not.
	Ad <sup>2</sup> Paretval, (uxor Conduramour.)	Ad <sup>1</sup> Feirefiss, (uxores, <sup>1</sup> Secundille, <sup>2</sup> Uerpansse de Joe.
		Ad <sup>2</sup> Joharies Presbyter in Asia.

Gwalchmai, Tristan, and others. We see him leave his country a simple child :—he is not educated like Lancelot by propitious fairies, who shower on him the most brilliant qualities ; but his innate simplicity of heart, and heroic virtue, combined with the trials of life, render him worthy of a place at the Round Table. Nothing is said of the Graal ; even the signification of the bleeding lance and severed head was not understood by the raconteur. Such a character, simple and childlike, who feared to question, yet was urged forward by some unknown power to a great and noble end, was the one best suited to a reunion with the ancient fiction of the Graal ; and at this early period, when poetry flourished, ere it had been obscured by a passion for mysteries, and the sombre erudition of the monks, the never failing instinct of poetic genius seized on this character in all its power, to dedicate it to the Graal, and to connect it with the ancient royal family of Graal; at the same time introducing the hero as prince of Anjou in honor of Henry II.

Wolfran von Eschenbach does not give any explanation of the holy Cup ; but to the reflecting reader, his description of its nature and virtue sufficiently point out the true interpretation. It is the impenetrable mystery of Faith. Neither the most brilliant deeds of chivalry, nor the arts of magic, nor an indefatigable pursuit through the world, not even the most profound and pious contemplation, lead to the castle of the Graal ; it remains unknown and indiscernible to those whom the Graal himself (the Divinity) has not destined to find it. It is to the innocent, the pure only, in whose heart the grace of God has sunk, whose heart is filled with an insatiable desire to possess all that is highest and most holy—that the Almighty reveals himself, when in his humility and contrition he believes him to be far from him, it is to him that his miracles will be revealed by the *election of his grace*.

This is the way in which ancient Tradition represents the mystery of the Graal ; it is the same with the mystery in which every order must believe, and which the Templars had seized in a manner to make us doubtful, from certain passages in legal actions against the Templars, whether their symbols and doctrines originated with themselves, or were borrowed from the poetic legend of the Graal. (See Du Puy, *Histoire des Templiers*, Brussels, 1751, pp. 25, 29, 263. *Epistol Innocent III. de Baluge*, Vol. 2. p. 68. and what Du Puy relates from the Chronicle of St. Denis, ch. 8. p. 22.) The German poet leads his hero from the faith of a child, through doubt and despair, to the pure and clear knowledge of God ; and this idea, though not perhaps so strongly developed, certainly formed the principal groundwork of Kiot's poem. In the latter, happiness is not gained by combating the enemies of Christianity, but the enemy in our own hearts. The combat is not rewarded by glory, riches, and gratifications, but by contumely, scorn, and distress of mind, until the heart is purified from the dross of doubt :—one trial succeeds another, as the Knight-Monk must experience them all before he can attain the highest rank of the order. This is the last tradition that was placed in the bright poetic crown of the Ideal World of the middle ages. Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table represented *temporal Knighthood* ; the Templars of the Graal the *spiritual Knighthood*. The Carlovingian traditions on one side displayed the power of temporal but Christian Knighthood in combats with the pagans ; on the other side, the same traditions showed that in all that appertained to *feudal government*, Knighthood was opposed to the Suzerain Lord. *The ascetic feeling of Monachism* spread a gloom over the legends of the Saints, and the joyous temper of the times was reflected in the lyric poems. Supposing, on the one hand, that these classes of knights and devotees were so dissimilar in their original design, their

vocation, and ultimate object, that the individuality of the one could not blend with that of the other ; and that, on the other side, the most ancient poets always looked upon Tradition as true, and to which they must, as much as possible, faithfully adhere, we find a remarkable explanation of the fact, which is also observable in Germany, that, in more ancient times, no poet ever thought of mingling the different traditions, or of placing the characters of the one in another. That was not practicable, until the tradition had left its parent country, and had passed into a foreign land.

The first poet of the North of France, who speaks of the tradition of the Graal, is Chrestien de Troyes, who was endowed with a truly tropical fertility, if indeed he can claim all that has been attributed to him. French Savans formerly placed him between 1150 and 1190,—by far too long a period. The more profound researches of Fauriel show, that we have no reason for placing his literary labours farther back than 1170. His *Percival* (Biblio. de l'Arsenal, Paris MS. No. 195, A. and Biblio. du Roi MS. fol. No. 130.) is dedicated to Count Philip of Flanders, who died in June, 1191. Death deterred Chrestien from finishing his *Percival*. From the 148th folio of the first MS. it is continued by Gaulthier de Denet, from the 180th folio by Gerbers, (probably Gyrbert of Montreuil, Minstrel to the Countess Marie de Ponthie, died 1251,) and finally by one Manessier, who dedicates his work to the Countess Johanna of Flanders, who died in 1244. In this way, half a century passed before this Romance was finished ! There is another History of *Percival* and the Romance of the Graal in the Bibliotheque du Roi, of which the first poem (MS. No. 7536.) continues that of Chrestien ; the other (MS. 1987.) states that the author has versified the prose tale of Robert de Boron.—The contents of the latest French Romances of Merlin, (2nd part,) of the new *Tristan and*

Lancelot, of Perceforest, the Morte d'Arthur, and also the Graal, &c. are more or less similar, and are all referable to a Welsh origin. All of these must be placed between the end of the twelfth century and the fourteenth. In the sixteenth century, and even before that time, when the ancient language became inconvenient, they were changed into very thick prose volumes, as the Roman de Percival, (Paris, 1529, and L'Histoire du Sangreal, Paris, 1523.) One romance rises from another, and borrows from it; and an enormous mass of the strangest adventures are thus accumulated, without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. There is no trace of a general plot; sudden apparitions of angels and demons crowd upon each other, while every characteristic trait disappears—there is no character in the persons,—and the tales and personages have no longer any sense or connexion between each other. Whoever has ventured to penetrate this chaos, turns away with sorrow, on seeing the beautiful creations of a sublime poetry disfigured by the monstrous mysticism of a sombre monachism, the ill directed erudition of priests, and an immoderate passion for all that was new and unknown. Nevertheless, we see, rising above this chaotic darkness, like the last gleam of the sun, a religious and Christian spirit, always zealously occupied, though not always with equal success, in penetrating the inscrutable mysteries of Faith, the miracles effected by Christianity over the whole world, and the blessed doctrines of the New Testament,—in expressing them by symbols, and in attaching them to the poetical and historical traditions, according to the character of Christian Chivalry. This is the only thing which gives to the scattered elements of these romances some connexion and support, and a sense which deeply affects us; although we must always lament that this Cherubim of light appeared to the eyes of the romancers through thick clouds, and not with that distinctness which we admire in

the German Percival of Wolfran. These mercenary minstrels were animated by no spontaneous enthusiasm ; in order to live, they were obliged to produce something new ; for this reason they searched on all sides, employed every combination, sought out every mystery, and thus profited by the popular passion for reading, together with the frivolity of the times, and the inability to appreciate the true or the sublime. For the mind of a people who could find the highest gratification in the trifling romance of Amadis and other pastorals, or in a monstrous allegory like the Romance of the Rose, must have been long deeply corrupted, and become too weak to estimate real poetry. From the thirteenth century we date the lapse of tradition into arbitrary and corrupt fictions ; and from that time we can no longer speak of an influence, or of the dissemination of genuine Welsh Traditions. In order to explain this opinion, we will only name the principal facts.

The Order of Templars, which the annexed TABLE will explain, had now disappeared with the Kings of the Graal. Amfortas alone remains, under the name of Le Roi Pêcheur; but it is only the continuators of Chrestien who first mention him, under the signification of a *fisher for souls*. His Knights have nothing in common with the Templars ; and, in fact, it would not have been prudent if the French poets, after the year 1250, had endeavoured in this manner to exalt an order, against which the most sanguinary and terrible proceedings had been commenced, (1303—1314,) and which was annihilated as a disgrace to humanity.

The miraculous mystery of the Graal, which no one can discover unless he is ordained to it, has disappeared. It is often named ; Arthur and all the Knights of the Round Table set off in search of it ; but they and the poets may be compared to men who seek, but who have forgotten what they seek after. Gawain, Lancelot, and others find the Castle of the Graal more than once, as they find many

TABLE II.  
PROGENIES REGUM IN SOT. GARALE.—TESTE POEMATE “TITUREL” ALBRECHT.

GENERATIONES.	
I. Tempus Christi nati.	Vespasianus de Roma.
II. Quingenti ann. ante Gandin et Tristan.	Rex de Tiberi et Bonifante. Argasilla—Parille de Francia. Sabbilor de Anjou. Aznabar de Cornwallis. II.—
III.	Elizabel de Arragon—Titurisone.
IV. Titurel, primus Rex in St. Graal, vixit quingenti ann.	Frimutel de Hispania. Titurel Richonde I.
V. Tempus Gardini, patris Gamureti.	Richonde II. (maritus, Kaitel de Toledo.)
VI.	Amforius, (Roi Pécheur.)
VII.	Josiane, (m̄ritis Kyot.) Segune, sponsa Tschoinatlandr.
VIII. Kardeiss et Loherangrin adhuc infantibus, mortuus est Titurel.	Herszeleide, (maritus Gamuret, v. supra.) Percival, (uxor Konduitamour.) Kardeiss.
	Urepanse de Joie, (maritus Feiretz, v. supra.) Johannes Presbyter.
	Trévracent eremita.
	Loherangrin.
	VIII. —

other castles, and, if the poet requires it, the Graal often appears in resplendent glory, or in the midst of lightning; he feasts the Knights with the most exquisite delicacies, he performs other miracles but always “sans rime et sans raison,” and like Deus ex machina.

Since they could no longer make honourable mention of the templars, it was necessary to invent other means of preserving the Graal up to the period of the Round Table; and it is found in Joseph of Arimathea, who was considered the first British apostle. Gregory of Tours (595) names him frequently, and Baronius in 1300 says of him, that he sailed from Gaul into Britain, and having preached the Gospel, he there closed his life;<sup>1</sup> but William of Malmesbury speaks at length of *Philip* as the apostle of the Britons, and in the passages quoted, he is stated to be in constant communication with the places where the remembrance of Arthur and Avalon was preserved. Gildas, Bede, Nennius, Asser, Geoffrey of Monmouth, in a word all, even the ecclesiastical historians, are silent respecting Joseph of Arimathea till the twelfth century, and this leads us to believe that his journey to England is an invention of the French and English monks of the thirteenth century. Even Chrestien knows nothing of him, but he is mentioned by his continuators. It is true, that in the ruins of the Abbey of Glastonbury, the funeral chapel of Joseph is shewn to this day; but that is explained, if we recollect that Robert Wingfield, ambassador of Henry the Eighth of England, sent to the Emperor Maximilian the First, a book of Joseph and other Saints, under the title *Discept. super dignitate, &c. Regnorum Brittan. et Gall. in Concilio Constantiens habita.* He was frequently also confounded with Josephus the historian,

<sup>1</sup> *Tradunt ex Gallia in Britanniam navigasse, illicque post prædicatum Evangelium diem clausisse extremum.*”

the son of Mathathias, and much was attributed to him which referred to the other.<sup>1</sup>

We will here quote a passage from the Launcelot of Boron, in order to shew the difference between the chivalry of the templars, of the Provençal traditions of the Graal, and of that which more modern poets understand by *their* knights of the Graal. “L'autre jour, jour de la Pentecôte, les chevalliers terrestres (also called La Chevalerie amoureuse) et les *Chevalliers célestes* commencèrent ensemble chevallerie, ils commencerent ensemble à combattre les uns contre les autres. Les Chevaliers qui sont en péché mortel, ce sont les chevaliers terrestres. Les vrais chevaliers, ce sont les chevaliers célestes, qui commencèrent la quête du St. Graal.”

“Les chevaliers terrestres qui avaient des yeux et de coeurs terrestres, prirent des couvertures noires, c'est à dire, qu'ils étaient couverts de péchés et des souillures. Les autres, qui étaient les chevalliers célestes, prirent des couvertures blanches, c'est à dire, virginité et chasteté.” (Revue des deux mondes. B. 8. p. 692.

It appeared unjust to the poets that Arthur himself should not be King of the Graal. The second and more modern part of the romance of Merlin remedies this. Arthur is the founder of the Round Table; which is now made to signify the table at which our Lord supped with his apostles; a cratera sent by God is placed upon it, which typifies the communion of the good with the wicked. The *Table*, and not the *Cup* is called the Graal; the cratera has

<sup>1</sup> In the romance of the Sangraal, Alain the great also appears again as the faithful companion of Joseph and great grandson of Celidon of Kamalot, and is for a long time the hero of the tale; nor does Conan remain without notice; and although little positive information as to the national history is to be obtained, yet this anxious striving after great historical names, fully shows the firm resolve of the author to invest his poem, both by their aid and the charm of ancient national association, with extraordinary interest.

disappeared in the East, and its guardians know not where it remains. There cannot be a doubt that the ancient Welsh Merlin was the first origin of this romance, it also describes minutely all the deeds of Arthur, and the love of Merlin for Viviane; but every thing concerning the Graal is superadded in the most forced manner, though related in the same way as in the other romances. In the Provençal tradition, Amfortas receives an incurable wound from the bleeding lance, in consequence of having violated the vows of the order. The poets of the north of France suppose this lance to be that which pierced our Saviour's side. The discovery of the lance during the crusades was undoubtedly the cause of this transformation, although Charlemagne and Otho I. had long possessed it. In like manner the Graal was connected with history, by making it the cup of the Holy Supper, or the cup in which the blood of our Saviour was received; probably in consequence of the discovery of the precious cup of which William of Tyre (1174) and all other Historians speak (*Albericus Arium fontium Chron.* ad a. 1101. *Marinus Sanutus* (1321) lib. secret L. III. p. 6. c. 4. in *Gesta Dei per Francos*. *Helinandus*, (1227) Chron. ad an. 720. *Jacobus a Voragine* in *Chron. Genuense* (1244—1298) &c. &c.

We see on all sides that the poets of the north of France entirely lost the ancient signification of the romance of the Graal, and enveloped it completely in a christian and dogmatic form; that they placed it in the midst of legends and relics, and thus abandoned every element which could be called Welsh.

## FABLE—THE MABINOGION.

IN recapitulating the results at which we have so far arrived, we should say that the immediate influence of the Welsh traditions upon the literature of France was effected by their passage through that country, where they became imbued with the spirit of French chivalry, and formed a perfectly new style, of which the tendency was to represent the true life and spirit of chivalry. But there is also another equally important element, which passed into France with these traditions, and like them became diffused over Europe; this is the ancient popular belief of the Welsh and the Bretons,—the ancient Celtic mythology it may be called,—the wonderful and interesting World of Celtic Tales. For, the beneficent fairies who educated Lancelot du Lac, the giants conquered by Owain, Tristan, and Peredur, the enchanted fountains, the miraculous trees, the dragons and serpents, the magic rings, the sorcerer Merlin, the Fay Morgana sister of Arthur, these aerial spirits which once more resumed their power under Shakespeare, do not come from the North nor from the East—they are Celtic—and all these powers and beings which are still religiously preserved in the poetic memory of the people of Brittany and of Wales, who have always been so remarkable for their attachment to their ancient literature, are of a nature totally different from those which have passed from Asia to the West. In the German and Scandinavian religion, belief takes an animated nature, which shows itself even after the introduction of christianity. In them nature and genius are not yet separated, and, in this primitive union, nature appears poetic from the mountains and rivers down to animated life. The miraculous beings of the

very pleasing letter, has dedicated her translation of the Mabinogion to her own children, but we doubt whether this title would have been employed in the twelfth century in the same sense. Tradition and fables are always supposed to contain faith and doubt. A tale is a dream of truth, with the full consciousness that it is but a dream. The relater knows that he repeats an imaginative poem. The manners of nations are reflected in the lives of individuals, and as, in mature age, man can only return to the fancies and pleasures of childhood and youth as to a dream, so, in like manner, a people cannot look upon their past history and historical traditions as fables, until they have long since passed that period, and have advanced to a much higher degree of civilization. In the poems of the most ancient bards, we find Owain, Peredur, Geraint, and others, mentioned as warriors, fighting with Arthur against the Saxons; these persons belong to history equally with Arthur. In the Mabinogion their historical character is annihilated with that of Arthur, who here appears in the same light as in the French romances, a spectator of the exploits of his companions; his court is the rendezvous of his heroes, whose adventures no longer appear as patriotic expeditions. So long as the people faithfully believed in the truth of the traditions of Arthur and his heroes, these Mabinogion could not have been composed. But we are aware of the tendency of tradition to amplification. This tendency does not show itself capriciously, but follows the general laws of nature, and only operates when the mind and body are satisfied. It consequently appears in this case, that tradition could not proceed to separate and enlarge on the histories of persons who had hitherto only acted a secondary part, until the glory of Arthur had attained its height, and the people began to find a monotony in the constantly repeated history of one person, and sought to replace it by fresh subjects. The bards and minstrels would then endeavor to revive their

feelings with respect to this ancient personage by the addition of new facts, over which they diffused a higher interest, by interweaving them with ancient and celebrated occurrences. We have already seen, from the testimony of Nennius, the manner in which, as early as the ninth century, the original Arthur and his histories are amplified. In the Welsh Archaiology p. 167, 175, &c. we find dialogues between Arthur, Kai, and Glewlwyd, between Arthur and Gwenhwyvar, between the latter and Eliwod, and between Tristan and Gwalchmai, which the learned Turner places in the tenth and eleventh centuries; they prove that these historical heroes, like their chief, often received a fabulous glory, but we do not find any trace of those elements of chivalry which we shall hereafter describe more minutely. While traditions were thus added to, the Celtic fables and tales would also require a greater extension, as well as a poetical worship, for a stationary condition cannot be imagined where a real existence is demonstrated; it is only in Wales, or perhaps in Brittany also that authentic proofs could be produced, of where and at what time they were combined with ancient historical remembrances. In the Mabinogion in general, the opposition still exists,— Christianity and Paganism are completely opposed to each other. The giants and black men, those savage, sanguinary and inhuman beings who so often appear, belong to Paganism, while the heroes of the tale are always good Christians, but the dogmatic tincture of Christianity is always wanting in these stories, and if their antiquity and purely Welsh origins, were not even still more evident from the intimate connexion with the localities, manners, and customs of the country, we should say that one of the strongest proofs of it existed in our inability any where to discover in them the hand of a priest or even of a monk. Courage and strength form the basis of chivalry; faith, honour and love, only serve to give it a higher vocation or consecration. Strength and courage are

also the characteristic traits of the heroes of the Mabinogion, but *Faith* remains at the bottom, even more than in our own Niebelungelied; it never forms the motive of actions; Honour is not yet very sensitive or refined, it is only introduced into the Mabinogion to prove strength and courage; and with regard to *Love*, the women appear more exacting than the men, who constantly say that there is no lady whom they love more than such a one, or such a one, but do not always prove it by their actions. In the Mabinogion we can, therefore, only discover the first slight traces of the dawn of Chivalry. These Heroes are called Marchawg, which Lady C. Guest, in speaking of Owain, translates, and, no doubt justly, *Knight*. But they are knights before whom the Seraphim of the Crusades had not yet carried the cross,—Knights whose hearts had not yet been softened by the soft gales of Provence and Spain, although they were more prepared to receive them than the bards of the sixth century, who knew nothing of this species of adoration. In the ninth century the bards had probably exhausted in the histories of the deeds of Arthur, the interest which this avidity for achievements and physical strength had excited, but they gained a variety by recalling this ancient world of fable; there they found giants and dragons to combat, demoniacal powers to contend with, fairies to amuse them; in short, a world made expressly for these indefatigable and invincible warriors. In this consisted the interest that procured for these tales, which must, of necessity, have existed in the eleventh century, that extraordinary reception from the French and the Normans, who were their untiring auditors. This reception would, on the other side, animate Wales and Brittany to improve still further in this fertile branch of poetry. William the Conqueror profited by this thirst for exploits in order to subdue England; the Church for the expeditions against Toledo and the Saracens, and for the Crusades in the East; and it did not cease so long as chivalry existed, and bodily strength retained its full

value. The dignity of knighthood was not hereditary, but purely individual; it was the reward of merit, and its value depended on the person who bore it. Bodily strength and the sword procured glory; which was the greater, if the hero withstood the attack alone and without succour. The heroes of the Mabinogion are knights-errant, who all seek adventures separately, and it was this, which above all, engaged the attention of the listening knight, who, placing himself in the situation of the hero, ruminated over the wonders of the tale as if he himself had witnessed them.

The Peredur of the Red Book of Hergest is the most certain proof we have of a higher antiquity than 1150, and of the pure tradition of the Cymry without any French admixture, for it is perfectly free from any trace of the Graal which was so soon after interwoven with the traditions of Arthur. There is not a single French or English poem existing in which Perceval could be introduced in connexion with the Graal; and the latter became so generally known together with his hero, and created so great an interest, that we consider it psychologically impossible that a poet should have undertaken to separate the Graal and Perceval. On the contrary, history teaches us that of all kinds of literature poetry has the strongest tendency to possess itself of new elements and to wander from its original source. Peredur is an invaluable document as regards the fiction of the Graal; but the same Mabinogi likewise proves that it is a recent compilation, and that the Tale existed long before it was committed to writing; for it refers in several places to anterior histories. Page 353, "And Peredur was entertained by the Empress fourteen years, *as the story relates,*" and page 359, "And the story relates nothing further of Gwalchmai respecting this adventure."

Thus it is not a fiction, it is not a fable, but it is a tradition perpetuated by writing. But nevertheless, it is a Mabinogi, i. e. according to Owen's Welsh Dictionary, *Juvenile Instruction*. We would propose this explanation;

the Red Book of Hergest was a guide for the instruction of young bards, it was a means, whereby the huge and unformed mass of objects could be retained in the memory; but to give life, spirit, and ornament, to these drily related tales was reserved for the oral instruction of the master; if he had a tale written with the same spirit and imagination with which the Bard (*the cantor historicus*) recited it aloud, we should have a very different work before us to those which are in no way distinguished by beauty of composition, and which we may compare to mere skeletons—as helps only to the memory, and books for the use of youth, and which, *in that form*, do not appear to us much more ancient than the manuscript in which they are found. Even if the poetry of the Welsh had arrived at its period of decay in the twelfth century, such works would not have been reckoned as belonging to *the Art*. On the other hand, Wales was not so raised above the civilization of the rest of Britain and the continent, that it should *then* present these tales, which excited an enthusiastic interest in the most distinguished men of the age as *Stories for Children!* We must draw attention to the circumstance that in the different compilations of the same story, as Iwain, Tristan, and Lancelot, and Erec, both in France and England, we see the most remarkable variations, together with certain adventures which are to be found in all, rendering it impossible to reduce them all to one common source. As they were perfectly new to the French, we cannot imagine that the French themselves should have invented these variations on their first introduction. But this difficulty is easily explained, if we seek for the common origin in the oral Tradition which was differently modified in the mouth of each Welsh Bard or Tale-teller. The outline which chance presented to the French clerk, always eager for novelty and reading, to reduce it to writing, was put into French verse in different ways by different persons, and thus these romances were formed.

## CHAPTER II.

INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE  
LITERATURE OF GERMANY.

In the preceding chapter it was necessary to enter into minuteness of detail, as it seemed to us more important to follow the Influence of the Celtic traditions on French literature in its interior developements, than to verify a fact generally known; and because the first passage of tradition into a strange land—it might almost be said into a new world—was of much higher importance than its posterior progress. Henceforth we shall only follow its exterior history, since the causes which rendered France capable of receiving the Celtic traditions had, for the most part, the same operation as in Germany, and consequently do not need repetition. It was not until the end of the twelfth century that Germany, which received these traditions through the medium of the North of France, and not direct from Wales, became acquainted with that class of romances of the Knights of the Round Table, which we have already placed in the second epoch. They comprise the romances of Lancelot du Lac, by Ulric von Zatzikofer; Erek and Enid, by Hartmann von Aue; Ivain, the Chevalier au Lion, by the same author; and Tristan, by Eilhart von Hobergen; all belonging to the last ten years of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century; Percival, by Wolfran von Eschenbach, 1205; Wigalois, by Wiret von Grafenburg, 1212; Tristan and Isolde, by Godfrey of Strasburg, 1214; continued by Ulric Thurheim, and Heinrich von Freiburg, 1240—1250; Wigamur and Lohengrin, about 1300; and many others. They all refer to and rest upon the French

poems, but cannot properly be called translations, for each of these poets evinces the German tendency to reflection; they generally adhere to their models very faithfully as to facts, but, with regard to motives, which seldom appear at all in the French, they follow their own understanding; and when they cannot discover good reasons for the extraordinary actions of their heroes, they frequently rely on their own Muse, ("Frau-Aventure") or excuse themselves and complain to their learned translator, for few of these Poet-Knights could read or write that they should be obliged to relate such strange adventures. In this manner the German character became engrafted on the French romances; the poet always accompanies the actions he relates, with his own remarks and reasonings, or gives them German forms and motives, rendering these poems the richest source of the history of Chivalry and the private life of the age.

Chivalry was in its prime during the first half of the thirteenth century. The court of the Landgrave Hermann of Thüringen, at Eisenbach, in 1215, was the rendezvous of the poets, and the centre of all that was most intellectual and civilized, as the Court of Weimar was in our own time. Emperors and Princes were themselves poets, and honoured the art; and the finest lyric poetry was only practiced by princes, the highest nobility and knights; while song formed a necessary accomplishment in the society of the nobles. But after the death of the Emperor Frederic the Second, misfortune and dissension spread over Germany, and poetry soon fell from its resplendent height, and was no more re-established during the middle ages.

We have already seen, that the exaltation of the temporal knight was the idea of the French romancers, which accounts for the great interest they excited in the nobles and knights of Germany. But a small part is preserved; an immense number of poems having been lost through the ignorance of

priests, from the rudeness of later times, and in the devouring flames of the Thirty years War. The German authors preserved the French form of two very short rhyming iambic stanzas; but the language which at first moved heavily and awkwardly in this foreign shape, constantly developed itself more freely, and gained a flexibility and pliability, united to great energy, until the language of Wolfran von Eschenbach, and Godfrey of Strasburg, attained a perfection which would bear a comparison with all that is beautiful and perfect in other times. In arranging these foreign romances, a poetic spirit was cultivated at the same time with the language. The more ancient poets were contented if their relations enlivened the thoughtful and soothed the unfortunate, they expected that their auditors should be pleased, and found them so; but they soon discovered, from their tendency to explain every motive, that it was necessary to arrange each tale, in order to make a whole; to shorten those episodes whose solution was not to be found in the model before them, and to give to their images a consistent character; and it is very satisfactory to find a decided improvement in the works of the same poet, as in the case of Hartman von Aue.

While in France the Celtic traditions encountered the national tradition of Charlemagne, which they could neither keep back nor unite with themselves, the French romances found a heroic and national tradition in Germany, in which Siegfried von Niederland, the Burgundian kings at Worms, King Etzel, Theodoric and Hermanrich, form the principal characters, and whose origin can be traced to pagan antiquity, where they mingle with the Scandinavian Mytheæ and are lost. Until the tenth century this tradition was preserved only in the national songs; but, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, even the clerks themselves did not disdain to celebrate the exploits of these heroes in Latin hexameters. The great epic of the Niebelungen first appears

in 1210, uniting the most ancient tales of Siegfried with the history of the fall of the House of Burgundy, and soon after with a number of other national traditions, some of which are of still older date, and bear on their surface the character of the chivalry of their age, showing how the chivalrous spirit of the French romances, when transplanted into Germany, had influenced even these popular poets. But still their general purport always differs from that of Arthurian romances, in the same manner that the Traditions of Charlemagne in France remained distinct from them.

The most ancient poems are all composed in the well known long quatrain strophes of the Niebelungen; the chivalric poets did not make use of rhymes in couplets until the second half of the thirteenth century, when they began also to understand these traditions, and previous to this period we can not discern any really artistical principle. In short, their songs were destined for a different audience, for the people and not, like the French romances, for the nobility, who would sing of the glories of chivalry. It is this which occasions the ancient paganism to which they owe their origin to appear through the several forms of christianity that invests the heroes of the national tradition, such as the fierce Hagen, the savage Monk Ilsan, the revengeful Chrienbild, Brunhild, Siegfried, &c. Wolfran von Eschenbach is the first who attained the highest degree of poetic art, in his *Perceval*. He is perfectly aware of his talents, and that he need not shrink from the high task he has imposed upon himself in this work.

“*Es unternahm dies Lied ein Mann,  
Der Gangestwerthes wohl prüfen kann;  
Der das Hohe weiss vom Niedern zu scheiden,  
Und es in liebliche Reime zu kleiden.*”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “This poem was undertaken by one, who knows how to appreciate that which is worthy of being sung: who can separate the noble from what is mean, and can clothe it in beautiful verse.”

He considers that his poem should be a mirror for both sexes; it should regulate their life, their actions, their love, and their hatred. He blames the narrowmindedness of those who desire to hear tales, without attending to the good advice contained in them ; who hasten to the conclusion merely to satisfy their own curiosity ; for them, his trouble and his work are all in vain, since his relation goes in at one ear and out at the other ; they would shoot an arrow without drawing the bow,—but a block or an elm stick would comprehend the sense of his poetry better than they ! (See *Percival*, translated by San Marte, Magdeburg, 1836, pp. 4. 232. 170. 556.) This confidence in himself rests on the firm basis of the clearness of his own views, upon a perfect knowledge of his subject, upon the high artistical and ethical point of view from whence he had seized the sublime idea which was hidden in the Provençal tradition of the Graal, and which he knew how to vivify, till he inspired the rude mass before him with an immortal spirit ; his predecessors had but a slight foreknowledge of this manner of treating a poetical subject, a manner which has created a new era in the epic poetry of Germany. He rendered himself so independent of the material of the tradition, that the unprincipled life of the Round Table, its vain splendour and ambitious ostentation, the savage champion Segramors, the detracting Kai, the Gramoflanz, and the celebrated feasts of Pentecost in the court of Arthur, are frequently the subject of his bitter irony.

From a comparison of *Percival* with the *Titurel*, we perceive the manner in which Wolfran drew his *Percival* from a shapeless accumulated mass in the romance of *Kiot*, and formed and polished it into a perfect and beautiful whole: rejecting all that did not answer his intentions. His extraordinary mind warmed with its celestial fire another equally great and original genius, who felt himself impelled to a similar undertaking. We allude to Godfrey of Strasbourg: without

imitation endowed with a free spirit and a profound knowledge of the human heart, a finished taste, and a splendour of language, which no one, either since or previously, has ever been able to attain, he made himself master of the Breton tradition of Tristan and Isolde, and named Thomas of Brittany as his predecessor. Commencing at the same point as Wolfran, viz. that material tradition is not dead, and that it receives life from the use that is made of it, still, he is perfectly different from Wolfran. The opinion of Wolfran, not only upon the unprofitableness of the heroes of the Breton romances, but of chivalry in general, if it were not at once animated by efforts of mind to attain the highest good, and to combat the enemies of the heart; and his profound manner of regarding the world in connexion with God, threatened to overthrow the whole of that ideal world, in which the poets and nobles seriously imagined they should find the object of pursuit, and thus to annihilate all that had been regarded as the most sublime poetry, and the most noble exercise of intellectual life. Godfrey of Strasbourg opposes this with all the force of genius. In his romance, he cultivates this ideal world with an irresistible charm, and the more easily obtains the general suffrage, from making love the pivot on which his story turns. But although the two authors are as opposite as fancy and reflection, as the most joyous gaiety and the most profound gravity, as amusement and wisdom, or, as the enjoyment of the present and the struggle for eternal happiness; yet both agree in no longer considering these French romances as real traditions, as was formerly the opinion in France, but as works of imagination, composed for entertainment, and to form a collection of good examples. This new opinion is first clearly given in the didactic poem "Der Wälsche Gast," by Thomassin, 1216. He enumerates good and useful books for children, and says, "Girls shquld hear, of the Lady Enid of Galiena, Blanchefleur, and Sorad-

amour; and youths, of Gavain, Erec, Ivain, Arthur, Tristan, Segramors, Kalogriant, and Percival."

Ir habt nu vernomen wol  
Was einer hören und lesen sol;  
Aber die zu sinne kommen sint  
Die sullen anders dann die Kint  
Gemeistert werden, daz ist war.  
Wann sie sullen verlazen gar  
Die Spil, die nicht war sint,  
Damit gefröwet sint die chint.<sup>1</sup>

These stories, says he, consist of fanciful images and inventions proper to amuse children and peasants, but more advanced youth should find pleasure, and seek for good council, in listening to truth itself. We find in him the matter of fact mind of mature age, which, having lost all youthful enthusiasm, and abandoned every chivalrous idea, no longer recognizes the true point of view in which these traditions were formerly regarded and propagated. The same opinion is expressed in more recent didactic poems, in Vridankes-Bescheidenheit, 1230; in the Renner of Hugo von Trimburg, 1300; in König Tirol, and Friedebräut, his son; in Wiesbek and Wiesbekin, of the same period, which contain good advice from a knight to his son, and from a mother to her daughter. Every thing in this life finds its antitype: and thus we see a whimsical tendency to carry the creations of imaginative poetry into every day life, in opposition to the dry and practical view taken by the above authors. We recollect the two fanciful expeditions which Ulric von Lichtenstein relates at length in his poetical autobiography, a work which carries the stamp of truth in every line. He sent a circular from Venice to all the Knights of Lombardy, Friaul, Carinthia, Styria, Austria, and Bohemia, informing them, that out of regard to them, the God-

dess Venus intends to set out to teach them how they might merit the love of noble ladies. Whatever knight comes to meet and break a lance with her, receives a gold ring in reward, which he must send to the lady of his affections. If Madame Venus overthrows the knight, he must prostrate himself towards the four corners of the earth, in honour of his lady, but if she is vanquished by a knight, he receives all the horses that she brings with her. He gives very minute details of the grand procession of fantastic masks which took place in 1220.

Another time this rich Austrian knight undertook a similar tourney, as King Arthur, returning from Paradise to re-establish the Round Table. Each knight who desired to become a member of this society must break three lances with the King without failing; he is then admitted, and receives the name of one of the knights of the Round Table; Albert von Arnstein was called Segramors; Heinrich von Spiegelburg, Lancelot; Nicholas von Lebenburg, Tristan; von Erchenger Landesrehre, Iwain; Heinrich von Lichtenstein, Gawain; &c. &c.

In 1452—1458, a Suabian champion, called Georg von Echingen traversed the whole of Burgundy, France, England, Spain, and Portugal; at Ceuta conquered a gigantic Moor, embarked at Rhodes, visited the Holy Sepulchre, and at last, returned to his country laden with jewels and honourable gifts, the reward of his chivalrous bravery. In a Tourney at Worms, even the Emperor Maximilian fought with a knight-errant, Claude de Battre, who had challenged all the knighthood of Germany, and defeated him gloriously.

Although these extravagances were principally excited by the romances of Arthur, and formed, not the rule, but the exceptions, yet we cannot disavow that these romances and real life influenced each other in many ways, and that the many fine traits of honour, bravery, noble-mind-

edness, and devotedness in the romances touched the heart and induced similar actions in real life. In every age the leading tastes of a people have been created and favored by the predominating direction of literature, which, again on the other hand, receives a modification from them.

The fall of chivalry rendered the decay of poetry inevitable. Chivalry, so bright and so splendid, fell with the fourteenth century, and was changed into the unholy law of *right to the strongest*. Internal dissensions divided Germany, and the victory of the Papal Hierarchy over the Roman Empire produced its well-known fruits. Art had perished under the pressure of the times ; many of the nobles became robbers, and the middle classes in the towns had not yet become sufficiently enlightened to patronize poetry. The ancient poets were still read, but the age that produced them had passed away ! It was at this period that the romances, which we have designated above as belonging to the third epoch, were introduced into Germany ; but there was no longer the spirit and the faculty to enliven them, as Wolfran, Godfrey, and Hartmann had animated the old romances. They are merely dry and faithful translations into a language which had degenerated almost to rudeness, and speak of facts that the world could no longer comprehend or admire. To this period belongs the poem "Der aventüre Krone" by Heinrich von dem Turlin, about 1250, although he approached more nearly to a better time, and particularly the cyclical and gigantic work of Ulric Fürterer, in the service of Duke Albrecht IV. of Bavaria ; who, about 1478, united in one work all the romances of the Graal and the Round Table, making use of the most recent French romances, as well as the works of Wolfran and Albrecht, (Titurel.) The list of chapters will show how and from whence he had drawn for his compilations.

## CHAPTER III.

INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE  
LITERATURE OF SCANDINAVIA.

So long as the hostile expeditions of the Angles, the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, from Hengist and Horsa down to Canute, disturbed England, it would have been most difficult, if not impossible, to disseminate the Celtic traditions in Scandinavia. For, in the beginning, it was this very period that gave birth to these Welsh traditions; and at a later time, war had so divided the nations, that, as we have before said, England itself could not receive the Welsh traditions by the side of the northern. There, the Germanic and Scandinavian traditions disputed the priority, like the Anglo-Saxons and Danes; and the admixture of national Germanic and Scandinavian traditions and the ancient mythology of the North with Christianity, so early introduced into Britain ; the struggle between the more softened manners of the Anglo-Saxons and those of the savage bands of pirate-invaders from the North, form precisely the characteristic elements of Anglo-Saxon poetry. For the Annals of Alfred of Asserius say, “*Saxonica poemata die noctuque solus auditor relatis aliquorum s̄æpissime audiens, docibilis memoriter retinebat;*” and in another place, “*Saxonicos libros recitare et maxime carmina Saxonica memoriter discere non desinebat;*” so that the poemata Saxonica are nothing more than the Germanic national traditions which were early propagated in Scandinavia, and whose existence in England is also confirmed by “The Traveller’s Song.” In like manner the ancient gene-

alogies of the Heptarchy, which all go back to Woden (the Odin of and the North, the Wadon of Germany,) confirm the fact of the Anglo-Saxons' attachment to their traditions. In the poem Beowulf, the scene is laid in Denmark, with her Isles in the Baltic; Sweden, the south shore of the Baltic; Friesland, and the country of the Franks. In the battle of Brunanburg, in Beorthnoth, &c., their Kings are praised as the conquerors of the Northmen; and, as far as we have been able to discover, no mention whatever is made of wars with the Welsh. Wales is also entirely excluded from the most ancient Scandinavian poems, although in almost every one, it is related how the heroes travel and make expeditions into Ireland, Scotland, the Orkneys, the Hebrides, the eastern and southern coasts of England, and even Iceland and Greenland. But the Northman only carried back dead booty to his icy country—he brought no intellectual riches. It would be more reasonable to speak of a northern influence on the traditions of Wales; for according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Arthur conquers Hibernia, Iceland, Gothland, and the Orkneys; he places the Saxon Lot, father of Walwan (Gwalchmai or Gawain) upon the throne of Norway; and again in the German Perceval, taken from Kiot, Lot is named as coming "from Norway." The same poem mentions an Isenhart, a Fridebrant of Scotland, Schiltung, Hernant, and Herlinde, all German and Scandinavian names. The heroes of Greenland (Gruonlant) are mentioned, a country perfectly well known to the Sagas of Scandinavia, but into which the Britons had never penetrated. Now, as the tales of Herlinde and Fridebrant, as well as Schiltung, are known from other German poems, it is evident that they have been mixed with the Breton-French tales.

We have before said that, from the earliest times, the traditions of Arthur had received a tone of Christianity; their dissemination would therefore be more difficult among

a pagan people, whose nationality was of so different a character. It was not until the year 1000, that Christianity began to shed its light over Scandinavia, and even long after that period it was regarded as a doctrine (*Comp. La Kristai Saga*) which could easily be interchanged with paganism; yet, it was Christianity alone which once more brought these nearly forgotten countries into notice. Adam of Bremen, about 1070, says, "To those who pass the Danish Islands another world opens towards Sweden or Norway, which are two extensive kingdoms in the north entirely unknown to our own world."<sup>1</sup> The seed planted by Ansgarius and Rimbert grew slowly, and did not take deep root before the first half of the twelfth century. About the same time literature commenced in these nations, principally among the Icelanders, who may justly be styled a nation of narrative writers.

Between 874 and 934, a republic had been formed in Iceland by Scandinavian emigrants, principally men of wealth and distinction, who, discontented with their fortune in their own country, or oppressed by those more powerful than themselves, sought refuge in this distant island. It preserved its independence for four centuries, keeping up a brisk commerce with the mother country, Norway. It was considered, even in Scandinavia, that the Icelanders possessed the ancient songs of the North, and the most authentic knowledge of its antiquity. All the most ancient Scandinavian chronicles confirm this. It was in Iceland that this ancient poetry, founded by Odin and the Gods, was the longest used; but being of pagan origin, it became constantly more artificial after the belief in paganism had died away. The Scald preserved his place at the court of the

<sup>1</sup> "Transeuntibus insulas Danorum alter mundus aperitur in Sueciam vel Nordmanniam, quæ sunt duo latissima Aquilonibus regna, et nostro orbi fere incognita."

northern kings long after the introduction of Christianity; he held, at the same time, the office of historian, which was always occupied by natives. The songs of the Scalds, originally propagated solely from memory, were by this means more carefully preserved. When a song had been recited, another learnt it by heart, and there are instances of the accustomed recompense having been refused to Scalds who had not remained a sufficient time at the court for this purpose. (Müller, *Sagabibliothek*, Snegle, Halls, Thattr.) Tales were recited with these songs, and became a source of great amusement both at the popular meetings and at court. In this way, the most ancient traditions of the noblest families in Iceland, and of the kings of the North, took their rise. They rested on the testimony of the Scalds, and were easily distinguished by their general character from those later tales which were entirely fictitious. It was not until 240 years had passed, that traditions were committed to writing. Thus a noble tradition, which had been carefully prepared by art when it existed only orally, soon passed into a literature which is distinguished for having exclusively made use of the mother tongue, then spoken in the three kingdoms of the North. The most celebrated name in this literature is Snorro Sturleson, born in 1178; he became Lagman in Iceland, and Iarl in Norway, and died, fighting for his country, in the last struggle for liberty, in Iceland. He wrote a history of the kings of Norway, or, according to his own words, for strictly speaking he only collected materials and arranged them, he recorded the ancient traditions of the kings who had reigned over the kingdoms of the North, as he found them in the songs of the Scalds, in the genealogies of the kings and chiefs, and in the memory of erudite men. The more modern prose Edda also bears his name, although this collection of the Mythæ of the Gods, and interpretations of wars, of metre, and of the images of pagan poetry, was gra-

dually formed by the labours of several persons. It was destined for the instruction of younger Scalds, and it proves that the ancient poetry was retained much later among the Icelanders as a learned art.

The ancient mythological songs, to which the more modern Edda refers, are almost all preserved. They are found in the poetic and more ancient Edda of Sämund, (from the priest Saemund the learned, who died in 1133, and is regarded as the author of this collection.) It also contains those heroic traditions which, founded on the remembrance of the great migration of nations, are here preserved in their primitive and pagan form, while those in Germany underwent a Christian transformation; on this account, therefore, they are invaluable in tracing the history of German traditions.

This is the national literature of Scandinavia, and we find a similar one in the heroic traditions of Germany, and in the traditions of Charlemagne in France. If we consider the purport of this literature, at once so completely national and essentially pagan; if we consider the office of the Scalds as court historians, who, like the Welsh bards, watched over the honour of the reigning family and its patriotic attachments; and if we remember the geographical situation of Scandinavia, whose political state in the middle of the twelfth century was equally isolated, and whose commerce was confined to the North of Germany, and consider the continual civil wars, we can comprehend that the time was not yet arrived when a foreign tradition could be transplanted to this ancient and unchanging Land of the North. There was no commerce with Wales or Brittany; and having seen how the Breton traditions began to spread in France about the year 1150, we are convinced that they could not enter Scandinavia previous to the change from their primitive to their chivalric form. To effect this, Chivalry itself must have taken root in the North, which did

not take place in Denmark and Norway until the end of the twelfth century. In 1113, under King Niels, there were no horsemen trained to arms; the first military fief was given under Swen in 1150, and it was only about 1180 that the states, nobles, clergy, and peasants, began to occupy a fixed place in the country. Sweden remained nearly a century behind in civilization. In 1280, under Magnus, a cavalry service of nobles was first formed; under him the dignity of Knight became a personal honour for the nobles, whose classification henceforth resembles the knighthood of other nations. Arnoldus Lubecensis, about 1209, says of the Danes, "Owing to their brisk commerce with Germany, the Danes have already adopted German customs, and imitate other countries in their dress and arms." In consequence of the exercise of chivalry, the Danes carried away the prize in combats on horseback. The sciences also were not neglected, since the nobles, in order that their sons should not only study the sciences, but be instructed in catholicism, were accustomed to send them to Paris, where they became acquainted with the French language and literature, and obtained some knowledge of the arts and theology. We find the same thing in Sweden in 1300, and there still exists a letter from Archbishop John at Upsal, (1291,) which contains rules for *young Swedes studying at Paris*, and who lived there in a private house destined to that purpose, and received a portion of the tithes of the chapter of Upsal for their maintenance. Great numbers of Norwegians and Icelanders went to the continent for instruction. An obituary of the convent of St. Blasien at Reichenau, near the lake of Constance, which extends from the ninth to the twelfth century, enumerates, in the last pages, a great number of Icelanders and Scandinavians in general, who are mentioned, some as clergy, and some as laymen. Adenais, roi d'Armes, roi des Minstrels, roi des Ribauds, at the court of Henry III. of Brabant, or of Philip

III. of France, born, 1240, seems to be correct, when he affirms in the romance of Bertha, that the French was the language received at foreign courts, particularly in Germany. Some German poets of this period confirm this, at least by their silly custom of employing so many foreign words. Several political events conspired to transplant French poetry into the North. Philip Augustus of France had lost his Queen, and demanded the sister of Knuds of Denmark in marriage. In 1193, he received the fair Ingeburg, whom the French often call Botilde ; he separated from her the day after the marriage, but was obliged to receive her again in 1213. Numerous embassies passed between the two countries, and French literature must have become better known. Alphonso of Castile sent an embassy in 1256 to demand Christine the daughter of Hakon, the young, in marriage. She was richly dowered, and was accompanied on her journey by Simon the preacher and other ecclesiastics, many Grandees and Nobles. The expedition passed through England and Normandy, and by land through France into Spain, and was every where received with great honours. Alphonso refused her, and she afterwards chose his brother Philip, 1257, although he had been destined to be Archbishop of Seville. (Torfæi, Histor. rer. Norweg. p. 271.) Sturle son of Thord, who continued the Hemiskringla Saga until 1265, has given this story in a poem. Lastly, Euphemia, daughter of Prince Vitzlaw III. and wife of King Hakon Magnusson of Norway, principally contributed to propagate, not only the Breton traditions, but likewise those of Charlemagne; and following the literary tastes of her husband's grandfather, Hakon Hakonson, (1262,) she well merited the surname of *Patrona Literarum* bestowed upon her by Kant, the Professor of History at Upsala, in his Observat. Historiam Suecanam illustrant. p. 1. Euphemia died in 1312. According to the MS. No. 543, of the Arnæ Magnæan. part of the University Library at Copenhagen, the Saga of Tris-

strand and Isoldis was translated into Norwegian in 1226, by order of King Hakon; but as Hakon Hakonson did not ascend the throne until 1233, the date 1226 appears only to indicate the commencement of the translation. The above named MS. likewise mentions that the Ivent-saga, (Iwain) was also translated by order of Hakon into Norwegian. The same thing is also avowed by the Möttels-Saga, (the story of Ginevra's Mantle,) which is an episode in Lancelot. Ivain was afterwards translated in 1303, by order of Queen Euphemia, from the Welsh<sup>1</sup> into Scandinavian, and it is to be found both in the Danish and Norwegian dialects. These translations are in short verses with double rhymes, similar to those of the French and German romances. There are also translations in Icelandic. The Samson Fagras-Saga, which agrees with the Möttels-Saga, relates the first origin of the wonderful Mantle which tried the fidelity of the Ladies at the court of Arthur, (Le Grand Fableaux, Percy Reliques, &c.,) and ends with these words, "Elida—sendi hana i Eingland Arthur Kongi, or risthar of Skiekis Saga.

The *Prophetia Merlini* is likewise to be found in the north, and the defective manuscript in the library at Copenhagen names the monk Gunlang as the translator at the time of Hakon Hakonson. It is to be remarked that this is in verse, and differs from the more modern romance of Merlin, which was not unknown. We find in the library at Copenhagen, Ivent-Möttuls-Friedland-Saga in the same volume with Percival and Erek; the latter appear to be translations from the German. Halfdan mentions another poem, Gabonis et Vigolis historia, which also seems a translation from the German poem Wigalois, or from the

<sup>1</sup>Wälsch. By this term the Germans of the Middle ages designate—not the language of Wales—but the southern languages of Europe generally.

French poem which formed the model for the German. Thus we find numerous Breton traditions in the three dialects of the North, together with translations of French and German poems, forming part of the national traditions; for instance, Flores and Blancheflores, translated by order of Euphemia; Valentine and Namelos, an ancient Icelander; Paris and Vienna, which is curiously written in strophes of five verses and alternate rhymes; Wilkina and Niflunga-Saga, of the thirteenth or fourteenth century; and a more perfect tradition of Deitrich than we ourselves possess; it appeals to German poems and to the men of Soest, Münster and Bremen. The German traditions in the Sagas of Blomsturvalla, Floamanna, and Magnus Iarl-Sagas are all treated in the Scandinavian spirit, and we comprehend how, by adhering to the ancient national character, such traditions would be more easily disseminated among the people, than those of the Bretons and the French, which were foreign to them. As in Germany the reading of these traditions was essentially confined to the court and the nobles, and the passages quoted above serve to show that it was chiefly the royal care to transplant these exotics; they formed, as in Germany, a considerable branch of literature; but we find, that when they were not mere literal translations, they were treated in a much more arbitrary manner than in the latter country. The *more ancient* German poets received a foreign tradition as simple truth, and consequently treated it with pious respect; it is for this reason that they bewail themselves, while relating tales of which they cannot imagine the motives, instead of entirely throwing them aside. The Scandinavians were not thus shackled, and from the first looked upon tradition, in the same light in which it was regarded at a later period in Germany, by Wolfran von Eschenbach, and Godfrey of Strasbourg, that is to say, as fiction; as the following facts will prove. The Swedish poem, "Duke Frederic of Normandy," translated, according to its own

testimony, first from the Welsh into German and from the German, by order of Euphemia in 1204, into Swedish, commences by saying that it was translated for the benefit of the young noblesse, who might there imbibe instruction as from the tales of Arthur. Its French origin is discoverable in the style of the adventures; the localities, Normandy, England, and Scotland; and the versification. The arbitrary style of the composition shows itself in Samson Fagra-Saga, and still more clearly, in an episode of the Wilkina-Saga; in which, a circumstance unheard of among the German and French poets, two heroes, Arthur and Dietric of Berne, belonging to perfectly different traditions, meet in the same adventure. King Thidrek solicits Hilda the daughter of Arthur of Britain, in marriage, through the intervention of Herbert, son of Isolden, the sister of Thidrek. Herbert carries her off; Arthur pursues them with his Knights, but in vain. This adventure is the more remarkable as it can be proved that the abduction of Hilda belonged, in the ninth century, to the traditional songs of the Scalds, viz. to the well known tale of Hogne and Hedin, which, at a later period, was probably influenced by the Anglo-Saxons, and was amplified on the coasts of Denmark and Friesland, for it is partly found in the Beöwulf; until in 1217, a German poet appropriated it anew in the poem of Gudrun, with other tales, of which we find traces until the eleventh century. The Wilkina-Saga here gives us a very rare example of a tradition, originally Scandinavian, being brought back five centuries later as a new foreign tradition, with names and localities changed from Germany, where it had meanwhile been naturalized, to Scandinavia.

Let us now sum up in a few words what was the characteristic difference in the manner in which the traditions of Wales influenced the poets, and the poets influenced tradition in these three nations; and it will be seen, if we are rightly understood.

1. That the *French* repeated the Breton traditions with a chivalrous enthusiasm;—that the Breton traditions rendered the French *Raconteurs* poets.
2. The *Germans* inspired the Breton traditions with a German soul;—the German *Raconteurs* created poetry from the Breton traditions.
3. The *Scandinavians* received the Breton traditions as poetry, and disseminated them as such.

## CHAPTER IV.

INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION ON THE  
LITERATURE OF FRANCE WITH REGARD  
TO CONSTRUCTION.

Hitherto we have only considered the influence which Welsh tradition exercised on the literature of France, Germany, and Scandinavia, from its general tenor; the question now remains as to the influence they exercised from the *Form* in which they were first received in France. We must here mark the distinction between rhyme and metre.

## I. RHYME.

The opinion commonly entertained is, that rhyme was introduced from the East, chiefly by the Saracens into Spain in the eighth century, but it was known and made use of long before the slightest knowledge of oriental poetry had been disseminated in Europe. The most ancient documents in rhyme now known are in Latin, but they are of an age when the language had already lost its classic character. During the palmy days of the Greek and Latin languages, rhyme was unknown or was avoided as a fault; it did not accord with the organization of these languages. The accent of syllables was subordinate to their quantity; each syllable had its proper quantity entirely independent of its accent, and rhythm was regulated by that quantity. But when, in later times, beginning in the third cen-

tury, the laws regarding the quantity of syllables which had been so rigid in classic ages were less regarded, it became necessary to regulate the rhythm by a new law. From this period then, it was founded on the accent of words. There were poets who endeavoured to unite quantity with this new rhythm, and partly succeeded; but in general, the latter was neglected. As the laws of quantity became more disregarded, the ancient rhythm passed into the modern. In this way the tetrameter, catalecticus, iambicus, and trochaicus were changed into two kinds of *popular verse*, of which the rhythm rests on the accent, and consists of fifteen syllables, which are divided into two parts by a pause after the eighth syllable; one sort was iambic, the other trochaic. The name of Στιχοι Πολιτικοι, i. e. popular, was given them by the Greeks, because this versification was made use of in their popular songs. We will quote the little poem upon the Emperor Aurelian.

“Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille decollavimus,  
Unus homo mille, mille, mille decollavimus;  
Mille, mille, mille vivat, qui mille occidit mille,  
Tantum vini habet nemo, quantum fudit sanguinis.”

And another in Suetonius.

“Gallos Cæsar in triumphum dicit, idem in curiam.  
Galli bracas deposuerunt, latum clavum sumpserunt.”

The change in the principle of rhythm, by which the Latin language became more nearly allied to the Celtic and German, was also the means of gradually introducing rhyme into the Latin, and caused it to become more common each succeeding century. For in order to compensate for losing the high perfection of rhythm founded on quantity, *rhyme*, the new principle of rhythm, which

accorded so well with the accent, was employed. After the Latin language had been so far transformed into the *Lingua Romana* that the latter could separate itself from the former like a distinct language, poetry regained in some measure, its ancient classic character, and discovered in leonine and other verse, a means of employing both rhyme and quantity.<sup>1</sup>

The question now remaining is, *whether rhyme is really of Latin origin, or whence it originates.*

It is to be found in the most ancient Christian and Latin poems, from the second half of the fourth century, in the Fathers of the church; Ambrose, Augustin, Prudentius, &c. Ambrose says,

“O Lux beata, Trinitas,  
O principalis Unitas.  
Jam Sol recedit igneus  
Infunde lumen cordibus.”

As far as we are able to discover, he is the most ancient poet who employs rhyme, and was born at Trèves, or at Aix, in 333. His father was of a Roman family, and Praefectus Praetorio in Gaul, (at Trèves,) and did not go to Rome until after his son Ambrose, had finished his studies at home. St Augustin (430) was his disciple, both in the doctrines of Christianity and in rhymed poetry. In a kind of preface to his poem against the Donatists, he says that he had put a Psalm into rhyme, in order to imprint it more deeply on the minds of the people. For this purpose he made use of the *political verse*.

“Abundantia peccatorum solet fratres conturbare,  
Propter hoc Dominus noster voluit nos præmonere,  
Comparans regnum cœlorum, reticulo misso in *mare*,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. 1.

Congregante multos pisces, omne genus hinc et inde,  
Quos cum transissent ad littus, tunc cooperunt separare. &c."

Prudentius, born at Saragossa, lived at the close of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth century, and was first an advocate, and obtained honours under Theodosius the Great, and was celebrated as a poet. Among the authors of rhymed poems in the following centuries, was Venantius Fortunatus, who lived in the fifth century ; he was an Italian by birth, who lived at Tours, and became, eventually, Bishop of Poitiers.

Columbanus (died 615) born in Ireland, went to Britain, and in 589, to Burgundy ; being driven thence he went to Armorica, and finally returned to England.

Drepanius Florus, (about 650) a Frenchman.

Eugenius (died 657) Bishop of Toledo.

Aldhelmus (died 709) Bishop of Wessex, an Englishman, and brother to Ines, King of Wessex.

It is a remarkable fact, that with the exception of the Spaniards Prudentius and Eugenius, all these authors of rhyming poems, either passed a part of their youth, or of their more mature age, in Gaul or in Britain, and it cannot, we think, be solely accidental that they were precisely those who were the first to introduce rhyming poetry. If the reasoning of Sharon Turner be correct upon the antiquity of Taliesin, Aneurin, &c. &c. and that the greater part of the poems attributed to them are authentic, it is at the same time proved that rhyme was as essential to a poetic form in Wales in the sixth century, as alliteration among the Scandinavians and Germans, and as metrical verse, resting upon the quantity of syllables, among the Greeks and Romans. If rhyme was in use in Wales in the sixth century, it was certainly propagated in Armorica ; if we ought not rather to presume that it was as truly indigenous here, as in Wales, from the commencement. It would be impossi-

ble to believe that these most ancient bards were the first to invent rhyme ; the ingenious and refined manner in which they use it proves the contrary. We are therefore obliged to date its origin much further back, although we have no documents to which we can refer : therefore as no other nation possessed the knowledge of rhyme at such a remote period, in so high a state of developement, we must recognize it as belonging to the Celtic Languages.

In Gaul, Latin had been so transformed by the mixture of Frank and Celtic elements, that even now the learned cannot agree as to which of these elements is the most essential in the French language.<sup>1</sup> The assimilation of the Celtic and Latin form in poetry, was thus most completely prepared; it was also particularly favoured by the clergy, to whom rhyme appeared eminently calculated for Christian poems and religious chants. The Spaniards Prudentius and Eugenius appear to contradict this assertion, but we know too little of their life to be aware whence they obtained rhyme; we must not either forget that the Celtic race extended beyond the Pyrenees, until, at a later period, it was confined to Biscay. Wilhelm de Humbolt, and Parrot, have proved that the Celtic language of the ancient

<sup>1</sup> While Latour d'Auvergne, De Grandval, Le Brigant, Legonidec, Maheo de la Bourdonnaye, and very lately, Panet de Premoliere, endeavoured to prove the great preponderance of Celtic elements in the French language, others on the contrary, as Monglave, Renouard, and Rochefort, recognize the Latin and the Romance (*Lingua Romana*) as the preponderating elements. Don Pelletiers Dictionnaire Celto-Armoricain and the Dictionnaire Encyclopedique ; Pinkerton, and quite recently, Prichard in England, Pictet in France, Bopp and Dieffenbach in Germany, have proved the near relationship and common origin with the Sanscrit and all the Indo-Germanic languages, and in the work by Parrot, (Berlin 1831,) he traces the Celtic language from the Pyrenees over the whole of Europe, even into the heart of Asia.

Cantabrians is discoverable in Biscay. From thence the knowledge of rhyme would consequently be spread over Spain, even previous to the arrival of the Saracens. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that during the ninth and tenth centuries, when Saracenic Spain became the chief seat of the arts and the sciences, and that the schools of Spain were visited by foreigners, particularly by the French; poetry, the poetic style of the Arabs, and consequently rhyme also, which had been so long known to them, would become more generally diffused; and, quitting the limits of of the Latin language, would extend to the vernacular tongue, increasing the Arabic influence beyond that of the Celts, especially after poetry had spread it light over Provence, which, previous to 1150, had very little intercourse with Brittany,-and none with Wales, although it had an essential influence over the North of France.

The most ancient literary monuments of Germany, the Hildebrandslied, the Wessabrunen-Gebet, and Maspilli, have the alliteration which was also common to the Scandinavian language, and of which there still remain numerous traces in many proverbs and short phrases; for instance, Hans und Hof, Haut und Haar, Gut und Geld, Stock und Stein, Maun und Maus, forming combinations of words which are to be found in the most ancient codes of laws, and which have their own legal signification; and indicate a very remote antiquity. The most ancient German poems possessing rhyme, are the Offrieds-Krist (863—872,) and the Ludwigslied (881.) To all appearance they did not receive rhyme direct from the Celts, the Saracens, or the Provençals, but from the Latin poets; who, although all belonging to the clergy, did not confine their poetry to religious subjects, but extended it to the episodes of the ancient heroic tradition; the fables of animals by Isengrimm; and other profane tales; for instance, Unibos, Heriger, Alveradacasima, and others.

The Northern languages retained alliteration until the twelfth century, and were entirely destitute of rhyme. The literary remains of the Anglo-Saxons are also without it, proving that previous to the incursion of the Normans, rhyme was unknown in England beyond the frontiers of Wales. On the other hand, the most ancient bards shew that they were acquainted with alliteration, which could only proceed from a Northern Anglo-Saxon influence; it does not, however, appear to have yet followed any fixed rule. A notice by Giraldus is here very important, as shewing us in what manner Celtic poetry adopted alliteration:—"In their rhymed songs and set speeches they are so subtile and ingenious that they produce, in their native tongue, ornaments of wonderful and exquisite invention both in their words and sentences; hence arise those poets whom they call Bards, of whom you will find many in this nation, endowed with the above faculty, according to the poet's observation,

'Plurima concreti fuderunt carmina Bardi.'

But they make use of alliteration in preference to all other ornaments of rhetoric, and that particular kind which joins by consonancy the first letters or syllables of words. So much do the English and Welsh nations employ this ornament of words in all exquisite compositions, that no sentence is esteemed to be elegantly spoken, no oration to be otherwise than uncouth and unrefined, unless it is polished by the file of this rule. Thus in the British tongue,

*Digawn duw da y unic.  
Wrth bob crybwyll parawd.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "In cantilenis rhythmicis, et dictamine tam subtiles inveniuntur, ut miræ et exquisitæ inventionis lingua propria tam verborum quam

According to this passage, at the time of Giraldus, a poem was considered *rude et agreste* if it were not alliterative. He himself designates this form as new, which ought to have struck him much less than rhyme, if he had not considered the latter as generally known and natural to his country, i. e. Wales. This *annominatio in cantilenis rhythmicis* appeared to him worthy of remark as a double ornament of the language, for it is evident, from the examples cited by Turner, that he had heard some rhymed poems under the name of cantilenæ rhythmicæ. Aldhelmus makes use of the same expression, "ut non inconvenienter carmina rhythmica dici queat,

Christus passus patibulo,  
Atque læti latibulo;  
Virginem virgo virginis,  
Commendabat tutamini."

The words reim, rime, rhimyn, are evidently derived from rhythmus. The Welsh have a particular word for a thing

sententiarum proferant exornationes. Unde et poetas, quos Bardos vocant, ad hoc deputatos in hac natione multos invenies, juxta illud poeticum,

‘Plurima concreti fuderunt carmina Bardi.’

Præ cunctis autem Rheticis exornationibus *annominatione* magis utuntur, eaque præcipue specie, quæ *primas dictionum literas vel syllabas convenientia jungit*. Adeo igitur hoc verborum ornatu, duæ nationes, Angli scilicet et Cambri in omni sermone exquisito utuntur, ut nihil ab his eleganter dictum, nullum, nisi rude et agreste censeatur eloquium si non schematis hujus lima plene fuerit expolitum, sicut Brittanice in hunc modum,

Digawn duw da y unic.  
Wrth bob crybwyth parawd.”

that was peculiar to themselves ; they call rhyme odl and cynghanedd ; while the Lingua Romana and the more modern Latin poets made use of an ancient word in a new signification for a new idea, rhythmus appeared to them the most proper, because accent alone formed the rhythm, after quantity was disused, and the accent accorded at the end of the line with the rhyme.

## II. METRE.

We do not find that the Welsh employed any particular metre for a particular style of poem, but at every period we see the varied richness of the most refined poetry. In one place the rhythm flows in an equal and monotonous manner,—in another, where the subject calls for it, it rushes on perfectly unrestrained ; the verses are sometimes short and sometimes long ; sometimes the rhymes follow in great number, sometimes they are interlaced or alternate ; the verses form strophes.

The French Epic, on the contrary, made use of either alexandrines, or iambics of five feet, which as in Arabic and Welsh poetry, formed strophes of eighty and more, or of ten or fewer lines, having all the same rhyme, and often finishing by a line without rhyme. The liberty of the Welsh metre is only to be found in lyric poetry and romances. For in the romances of Arthur, the language of the North of France has a particular form, that of iambic verse of four feet, and double rhyme, which became afterwards so general, that up to this time we do not know of a romance in any other metre. The romances of another kind, for instance, Alexander, and even the ancient Roman de Rou, sometimes assume in particular parts the metre of the national epics ; the English poets, on the contrary, Sir Tristan, by Thomas

of Ercildoune, and others, soon returned to the form of strophes. So long as we do not discover any Breton remains in this form, we can only conjecture that the Northern French borrowed it from the Bretons. Their existence is proved in Wales by ancient Welsh poems, but these are not consequent on the former. It is worthy of observation, that even in the tenth century the Latin poets employ this metre in short ludicrous tales, which were not intended for singing;<sup>1</sup> and it is a fact, that in the twelfth century, it is the general form of all chronicles except Latin, and replaces prose. The French national epic poem in long quatrains was intended for song, but we have no proofs that the poems of Arthur in short verses were ever sung in France: on the contrary, the poets generally gave them to their patrons as *books to read*; the same thing took place in Germany. They were certainly read in society at the court of Henry II. The chivalrous spirit of these poems rendered them unfit for introduction among the people, and even if formerly they were sung by popular singers, they became afterwards, under the pen of learned men, such as Chrestien

<sup>1</sup> “Stans apto consistorio  
Gallus in sterquilinio,  
Cujus lætus cacumine  
Cantabat constantissime.”

Gallus et Vulpes, N 10<sup>e</sup>. S 11<sup>l</sup>. 7100 p. 345.

“Rebus conspectis sæculi  
Non satiantur oculi,  
Aures sunt in hominibus  
Amicæ novitatibus.”

Rubos, eod. p. 354.

The metre is the same with the above named devotional songs. For the serious epic, hexameters remained in use either with or without Latin rhymes, though rarely the latter.

de Troyes, Manessier, and others, works for reading.<sup>1</sup> It is very remarkable that contrary to the practice of the Welsh and Latin poets, the French obstinately adhere to the iambic metre, without troubling themselves about the accent of words. We are of opinion that this form passed from the Latin to the vernacular tongue.

The epic verse of the German romances is freer and consequently approaches nearer to the Welsh versification; for in the traditions of Arthur, and others which were not popular, verses with double rhymes were employed which had generally in a line of masculine rhymes *four*, and in a line of feminine rhymes *three* accents, imparting to this rhythm, which was sometimes iambic and sometimes trochaic, a variety and elasticity wanting in French verse.<sup>2</sup> We do not deny that the Latin poets, and after them the French, (for Welsh verses were never heard in Germany) occasioned the change from the long verse with eight accents of the

<sup>1</sup>“Jō dī ē dirai kē jō sul  
Wace de l’isle de Gersui,  
Ki est en mer verx occident,  
Al sien de Normandie assent, &c.”

Roman du Rou, 10443.

“Chr̄estiēns sēmē ét fait sēmēncē  
Dū rōmāns quē il ēncōmēncē, &c.”

Percival, f. 1.

“Artus li bons rois de Bretaigne  
La cui proesce nos enseigne, &c.”  
Chrestien, Chevalier au Lion, s. 1.

<sup>2</sup>“Seliēhārē allēr dingē,  
Cheisēr allir chūōninge,  
Wol du oberitter ewart,  
Lere mich selbe dinin wort.”

Ruolandes liet, f. 100. v. 1.

eight century, first to the epic verse of the *Neibelungen*, and afterwards to the short verse, but nevertheless it must be admitted that the language developed itself too energetically to allow a foreign influence to be very important. This could only be alleged with regard to the introduction of two consecutive rhymes and the want of the strophic form: for after alliteration fell into disuse in the eighth century, all the German poems are strophic until the eleventh century.

In Scandinavia the poetic form followed an analogous route with that in Germany. We cannot here enter further into the details of the question, as it would involve an explanation of the very extended and complicated researches of Grimm and Lachmann, which would be beyond the limits of this work.

## CHAPTER V.

## FALL OF CHIVALROUS POETRY.

WHILE in the ancient poetry of the East, we trace its slow developement, and see its astonishing preservation during entire ages, and observe in ancient classic poetry a progressive movement, until, having arrived at its highest point, it sinks gradually into barbarism;—in modern poetry, on the contrary, each successive fall only appears to be the foundation for a new and hitherto unknown flight. The tales of Arthur, short, confined within narrow limits, and in the commencement of slight importance to the world, passed into Brittany. After five centuries, we find them, separated from their historical foundation, forgetting their patriotic signification, and on the point of degenerating into fanciful and arbitrary fables—revivified in France by a combination with chivalry, and gaining with it universal importance. Again when the first charm of the fantastic richness of the subject was over, when the want of reality in the characters and of a higher and more intellectual principle was felt, and the inspiriting elements of chivalry were nearly exhausted, poetry rose again on the wings of faith by an union with the tradition of the Graal. It was poetry that preserved the remembrance of Arthur's heroes, viz. Lancelot, Tristan, &c. and while it flowed on and constantly improved, it extended itself on every side and became an universal literature, until there did not remain a country or a poet in Europe to which it was unknown. From the Tagus to the Archipelago, from Sicily to Iceland,

the romances of Arthur were listened to with delight. But the ancient religious and valiant chivalry had perished during the course of three centuries, and an affectation of former habits of life produced but a spiritless and artificial imitation. The ancient language became unknown, and its poetical form inconvenient. It resolved itself into an easy and free prose, and the chivalrous elements of the ancient models were lost in a love of imaginary adventures. The ecclesiastical doctrines had nourished and exercised the absurd faculty of sporting with the most abstract ideas, and the moral element, which, it is true, was but faintly discoverable in the ancient romances, transformed itself into a dull allegory, or was lost in a monstrous mysticism.

Thus the romances of Amadis represent the modern chivalry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, without dissimulating their origin, viz. the Breton traditions of Arthur; and the supernatural beings of the Welsh are transformed into allegorical personifications of virtues represented by fairies, as the courageous fairy, the energetic fairy, the sincere fairy, &c. and the great allegorical King of the Rats in the Romance of the Rose, obtained the prize, because he could satisfy every wish, however frivolous; thus the more modern history of the Graal extolled the study of that work as a true *arcanum* against the devil, and a sure means of acquiring beatitude, while, on the other hand, the priests declaimed against the improprieties of the chivalrous romances, which became daily more shameless. Nevertheless all these prose romances had a different influence in France and Spain to that which they had in Germany, and had none whatever in Scandinavia. There was, at a later period, in these countries, a certain splendour of chivalry which was certainly borrowed from the knight of poetry. Fantastic fêtes and processions, ridiculous ornaments both in dress and arms, figures and curious devices, both on the shields and weapons, the most whimsical vows, pilgrimages

and tournaments, the most extravagant devotion in love, and the most punctilious observance of etiquette and ceremony, all that the ancient poets pointed out over-ran life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; while in Germany, though something of the same kind was seen under Maximilian, it was never carried to this ridiculous height. While in Langue-doc, the martyrs of love realised, in an unheard of manner, all the absurdities of heroes of romance; in Germany the airs of the Troubadours spread among the people, inspiring the tame and conventional song with a new truth, and replacing the pedantic courtesy of chivalry by a natural passion. While in France and in England, the knights made vows of the Peacock and Pheasant, favourable to warlike adventures,<sup>1</sup> the Germans remained in ambuscade in the forest during the winter, and waylaid a rich cargo of merchandise. While in those countries allegorical spectacles, fêtes and banquets, embellished the commerce of life; among the Germans there were only a few games during Lent, and mysteries represented with lively simplicity by thriving artisans. The terrible wars of fanaticism, and the Hussite peasantry, were calculated to cure the German knights of gallant combats and the enthusiasm of love; while again, the religious Spaniards in the war against the Saracens, when the liberty of their country and religion was at stake, rivalled their enemies in love adventures and courtesy. While in that country, these romances still continue to be a source of intellectual history, and serve to explain both manners and poetry, in Germany they did not represent the usages of society, and no longer interested any but the higher classes. The Titurel alone, from the theological and theosophic form in which Albrecht had enveloped the tradition of the Graal, still maintained a greater influence. The discovery of the art of printing poured in a new deluge of romances of Ar-

<sup>1</sup> Legrand,—*Vie privée des Français.*

thur and the Graal, and this branch of poetry seemed thus, to endeavour, from a presentiment of its proximate fall, to guarantee its eternal preservation. In the Appendix No. 3. we add a list of ancient editions until the year 1600, which, however, we do not consider to be complete. The extinction of these chivalrous romances had, in fact, been long since approaching. In the South it took place in a literary sense—in the North politically. While Dante condemned the daughter of Guido di Polenta to the infernal regions, for having been led astray by reading *Lancelot du Lac*, Ariosto in his *Orlando* ridiculed that fantastic and decrepid chivalry with the most cutting irony by conducting it into the region of fable; and Cervantes destroyed the passion for chivalrous romances by his biting satire. The middle classes of the North freed themselves from the feudalism which had hitherto reigned there exclusively; the minds of the people were invigorated by the study of the classics, until the reformation in Germany and in England, destroyed the old world of chivalry, and a new era in poetry arrived, represented by Shakspeare, which, Janus-like, at once looked back on the ancient splendour of the past, and forward to the modern Protestant world.

## APPENDIX.

### No. I.

The *Leonine verse* (whose name is not to be derived from the Parisian Monk Leo, of the twelfth century, as Du Fresne asserts) appears in Germany at the same time with the commencement of Latin poetry, and is the favourite form with the monks, from the ninth to the fifteenth century. We subjoin a few examples of the varied manner in which rhyme was employed in hexameters, in some poems of the tenth century, but only in poems which are *not* rhythmical.

Laus Domino qui me salvabat dente lupino.

Ecbasis, 1221.

Hic rex Guntharius cæptum meditatur ineptum.

Walthur, 1304.

Seu bello, seu venatu, seu quolibet actu.

Ruodlieb, 1070.

Ludendum magis est dominum quam sit rogitandum.—

Pœniteat vel eum cogitat mala quæ faciebat.—

Ergo cui regina poli componere quibo.—

Me circumvoltabant, dente sed asperitabant.—

Totus conticuit gress, atque crucis siluit lex.—

Et ille sit quem de fonte lelvaveris inque.—

Piscibus ut citius vorer, aut diris crocodilis. —

Quid calidum gelidum, dominorum quid famulorum.—

## No. II.

The monks of St. Gall already knew that German verse was not metrical, but only rhythmical. Their *casus* relate (Pertz 2, 9.) that about 917, on Innocents' day, according to ancient custom, the Bishop Salomon was chosen to be master by the scholars, (a jest of that period,) and that the boys ransomed themselves by Latin phrases. *Parvuli latine pro nosse, medii rithmice, cæteri vero metrice—illum offeruntur.* The younger ones only offered prose; others more advanced, offered accented verses in the German manner, the elder ones metrical verses. Some of the latter are quoted, they are *hexameters with Latin rhymes*.

It is to be regretted that there are no examples of accented verse, which were probably in rhyme, for the rhythmical verse without rhyme is only found among the most ancient Latin-born poets; but still the opposition of rhythmical and metrical verse is important.

## No. III.

LIST OF THE ANCIENT EDITIONS OF THE ROMANCES OF  
ARTHUR AND THE GRAAL, DOWN TO 1600.

## 1. FRENCH.

1. Très plaisante et recreative histoire du très preulz et vaillant chevallier Percival le Gallois, jadis chevallier de la table ronde. Lequelacheva les aventures du St. Graal. Avec auschuns faictz belliqueulz du noble chevallier Gauvain, et aultres chevalliers estans au temps du noble roy Arthus, non auparavant imprimé. *Paris, 1530.*

2. Historie du San Graal qui est le premier livre de la table ronde, laquel traicté de plusieurs matières recreatives, et ensemble la queste du dict St. Graal faicts par Lancelot, Galaad, Boors, et Percival, qui est le dernier livre de la table ronde. Nouvellement imprimé à *Paris*, 1523.
3. Histoire du Roy Artus et des chevalliers de la table ronde. *Rouen*, 1488; *Paris*, 1502; *Paris*, 1543.
4. Les grandes Chroniques de Bretagne, depuis le roy Brutus jusqu'à Cadvaladrus, dernier Roy Breton. *Caen*, 1518.
5. Les devises et armes des chevaliers de la table ronde qui étoient du temps du très rénommé et vertueux Artus, Roy de la Grande Bretagne. *Lyons*, 1590.
6. L'Histoire de Merlin et de la table ronde (with Viviane) *Paris*, 1498.
7. La vie de Merlin. *Paris*, 1528.
8. Historie de Perceforest, Roy de la Grande Bretagne, 3 vol. *Paris*, 1528—1531.
9. Le Roman de Lancelot du Lac, etc. *Paris*, 1494.
10. Le Roman de Tristan le Leonais, et Le Nouveau Tristan *Paris*, 1544, 1567, 1586. *Lyons*, 1577.
11. Ysaie le triste, fils naturel de Tristan le Léonais.
12. Les faicts et gestes du Roy Meliadus de Léonais, père de Tristan. *Paris*, 1523, fol. et 1584, quarto.

## 2. GERMAN.

1. Titurel; des Albrecht. 1477.
2. Percival, von Wolfran von Eschenbach. 1477.
3. Tristan, in prose. Augsburg, 1498.
  - Worms. bei Georg Hoffmann. Ohne Jahr.
  - Frankfurt, 1587.
  - Nürnberg, 1664.
  - Dramatisch von Haus Sach.

- 4 Wigalois, protestische Auslösung des deutschen Schichtes Wirkens von Grafsburg, 1470. The same Frankfurt, 1564, and 1586. Strassburg, 1519.
5. Wäckungen Merlin's mit einem Kommentar des Manns ab Siedulis. Frankfurt, 1608.
6. Wie ein brittonischer Ritter die Echte der Rittern den Arthus Hof fand und hümbrachte, von Johann Hartlieb, 1450.

### 3. ITALIAN.

1. L'antica cronica della Gran Bretagna. *Venezia*, 1558.
2. La vita di Merlino con le sue profezie, 1539.
3. Tristan. *Venezia*, 1552—1555.

### 4. SPANISH.

1. Tristan. *Sevilla*, 1528.

### 5. ENGLISH.

1. Morte d'Arthur, with the Graal, 1485.
2. The life of Merlin, surnamed Ambrosius, his prophecies and predictions interpreted, 1641—1658.
3. The ancient order, society and unitie laudable of Prince Arthur and his Knightly Armory of the Round Table, 1583.
4. The true Legend of famous King Arthur, 1601.
5. The Hystorie of the most noble valyant Knight Arthur of Lyttel Bretagne.
6. The Story of the most noble and worthy King Arthur.

### 6. WELSH,

Are quoted by Turner in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, with reference to Lhuyd's Archaeologia, pages 256, 262, 264, 265.

## ADDENDA.

### No I.

#### THE HOLY GRAAL.

THE word, *Gral*, or *Graal*, has received various interpretations from the learned; and if we omit those derived or taken from the poems of the Holy *Gral*, or relating to the *Gral* of poetry, and which are therefore not to be cited without petitio principii of these, we shall find the following are principally to be considered.

1. It is explained to be a vessel.—

(a) *Garalis*, in *Æfricus* (eleventh century.) Gloss Angl. Saxon. ed Sommer p. 80, and also at the same time *acbatulum*, for the Anglo-Saxon word, *Vinegar vessel*. In Leo Ostiens (twelfth century,) in the Chron. Sasin. L. 1 c. 24 and 28 in the numbering of several vessels, the plural *garales*. Further information concerning the signification of the word *Garales* may be found in Ducange Gloss.

(b) *Gradalis*, *Graatz*. Helinandus (who died 1227) in his Chronicle (Tissier Bibl. Patr. Cisterc. T. VII. p. 92) in making mention of the Romance of the Holy *Gral*, explains the word thus; *Gradalis sive Gradale gallice* dicitur *scutella lata* et aliquan datum profunda, in qua pretiosæ dapes suo jure divitibus solent apponi *gradatim* unus morsellus post alium in diversis ordinibus, et dicitur vulgari nomini *graatz*, quia *grata* et acceptabilis est in ea comedenti; tum propter continens, quia forte *argentea* est, vel de alia pretiosa materia; tum propter contentum, id est ordinem multiplicem pretiosa rum dapum.

(c) *Graal*. Roquefort (Gloss : de la Langue Romaine ; Paris 1808.) sub voce *Graal*, *Graille*, *Greal*, plur. *Graux*, *Greaux* gives an explanation which does not exactly apply here ; as *baton d'augure*, *baton pastoral*, *orosse d'abbé d'évêque*. But again under the word *Graal*, *Greal*, plur ; *Graaux*, *Greas*, *Greaux*, he gives, *Vase à boire*, *grand plat*, *grand bassin creux*, propre à servir des viandes. He illustrates this signification from a note of the Assizes of Jerusalem, p. 289. relating to Court offices, and more particularly to the office of Seneschal.

“ Le jor dou coronement le Seneschau peut et doit ordener le mangier dou jor, et comment on servira celui jor en la manière que méans li semblera \* \* et quant le Roy aura mangié \* \* doit le Seneschau mangier, et toutes les *escuelles* et les *greaux* en que il aura servi le cors dou Roy dou premier més (service) doivent estre soues (siennes) pleines de tel viande com le cors dou Roy aura esté servi celui jor.”

For this reason Roquefort remembers the derivation attempted by Borel from *gres*, *earthenware*, *crockery*, as it is impossible that kings should have dined off such mean dishes which were always left as presents to the couriers.

(d) *Grasal*. According to the old Glossary of Borel (Tresor des Antiquités francaises 1655) the people of Toulouse, Mantauban, and Castres in his time used to call a vessel *un grasal* or *une grasse*: and from these observations he deduces the signification ; *dish*, *bowl*, *deep or hollow basin for food or drink*, which is the same meaning retained in the poems relating to the Holy cup or vessel. In its first origin it might perhaps be connected with the Greek *γραω* (to eat.)

## 2. Blood of the Lord *Sangreal*, *sang royal*.

The saint Greal is frequently but improperly derived from this. This may have arisen from a note of Jacobus

a Voragine (1244—1298.) in the Chron. Genuens. (Muratorii Thesaur. rer. Ital. T. IX.) in which he speaks of the well known vessel, (cup or dish,) which the Genoese had received as part of the booty at the conquest of Cæsarea, and which the poem of Titurel designates as the counterfeit Gral; “*Illud vas Angli in libris suis Sangreal appellant.*” This reference to the romances of the *Holy Gral* is undoubtedly, and it is therefore evident that the division ought to be *San greal* not *sang real*.

3. The opinions of Kanne (Chrestus im alten Testamente p. 132.) and Von Hagen, (Briefe in die Heimath,) on the derivation of the word *Gral* are so contrary to all other authorities on the subject, and to the idea which has always been connected with the word *Gral* in the West, and, at the same time, receive so little confirmation even from the supposed derivative, that we deem it unnecessary to say more on this head.

4. *Circle, orbit, circumference, or ring.* Mone in his Anzeiger für kunde des Mittelalters, 1833, p. 289, discovers the original meaning of the word *Gral* to be *a circle of nine tents*, or *circle* in general. This discovery seems, however, to rest in the imagination of the Poet alone.

5. *Pit, cavern.* The learned orientalist Von Hamer (Kuriositäten, B. IX. p. 118.) joyfully announced the discovery of the true derivation of the *Gral*, which he had only been able to guess at in his Mysterium Baphometis revelatum. “In the Arabian language *gar* means a *cavern*, *al* is the well known Arabic article;” and he has read the following inscription on an ancient baptismal basin in Radkersburg: “‘Have ait garal XII;’ signifying ‘be saluted, says the cavern of the twelve;’ and the traces of this cavern of the twelve,” he continues, “are indeed really preserved unto this day in the historical traditions of the East.” In this manner he arrives at the cavern in the mountain Rakim, which is likewise to be found mentioned on the well known

Gnostic monuments of the middle ages, and the cavern Sermenai, where the twelfth Imaun sleeps until doomsday, when he will unite all religions into one. "It was from a dark cavern that the fire worship of Zoroaster came forth, the Mani and Mokanna. The ancestors of the Munalide, or eastern Gnostics, founded their doctrines in caverns, of which those of the twelve wise men of the mountain of Rakim had served as the original example."—But alas ! this glowing and interesting deduction with its document of the baptismal basin falls to the ground, as it is anything but Templarlike. The M.S. as every competent judge will instantly see, after looking at the representation of it in the "Kuriositäten," is neither Majuskel nor Minuskel, nor altogether belonging to any kind of writing which has ever been established by custom ; but the letters have been disfigured, either intentionally or through ignorance, and are totally incomprehensible.

Since the clamor about these and similar basins and inscriptions, many more of the same kind have been discovered ; for instance, at Berlin and Freiburg in Thüringen, and they may be found without difficulty in the curiosity-shops of Nuremberg or Augsburg, in which places they used formerly to be frequently manufactured by the tinmen. Nothing therefore can be thought of this new discovery of the secret of the Gral; and indeed less than nothing ; since Von Hamer has been sadly exposed and cut up in similar experiments ; for instance, in the second yearly account of the Thüringian Saxon Society, p. 36. and in Nell's contradiction of his Myster. Baphom. revelat. This much is quite certain, that no sort of conclusion or determination as to the origin of the tradition, or of the mystical signification of the Holy vessel, can be arrived at from the word *gral*.

OF THE MYSTERIOUS SIGNIFICATION OF THE GRAL, THE  
DERIVATION OF WHICH FROM THE EAST HAS BEEN  
FORMED IN VARIOUS WAYS.

It is possible that an imperfect or incorrect account of the *Heliotrapezon*, or *Sun-table*, of the pious Ethiopians, which, according to Herodotus, was covered every night with meat and fruits, might have been preserved, and perhaps more widely disseminated in oriental tales at a later period. This tradition has spread even to India, and the *Vaja Purana* describes the locality and surrounding country in precisely the same manner as the German poem of Titurel describes those of the Gral. It says, "In the West, in the country of the Troglodytes, lie the extensive mountains of the Sitanta, rich in metals and precious stones. They are surrounded by an agreeable plain, enlivened by the song of birds and the hum of bees. There are towns with gates, and the streams which water the country descend from the Lord of the Zodiack, and collect themselves into one stream, the River of the Moon. There Siddhas and Yacshas dwell in caverns, and in many intricate but pleasant labyrinths. There too, beneath immense caverns, is the Cridavana, (grotto of Crida,) the favorite resort of Mohendra, where every kind of knowledge, and the fulfilment of every wish may be obtained."

Further, it is not impossible that the well known and highly prized *Black Stone* of the south-eastern corner of the Kaaba in Mecca, may have some obscure reference to our tradition.

This stone was greatly venerated by the Mahomedans, and kissed by pilgrims with the greatest devotion; it was, in fact, called by some devotees, *the right hand of God upon earth*. It is considered to be one of the precious stones of

Paradise, and to have fallen to the earth with Adam;<sup>1</sup> and having been preserved and placed in safety, at the time of the deluge, the angel Gabriel subsequently delivered it to Abraham, when he built the Kaaba:<sup>2</sup> in like manner the angel ordered the temple to be built by Titurel for the *Gral*.

The temple at Mecca is also styled *Masjad al alhorâm*, i. e. the holy, inviolable, and inaccessible;<sup>3</sup> as the *Mont Salvage* in Titurel is called the protected mountain, and the Castle of the Graal is undiscoverable and inaccessible to the unconsecrated.

Finally, it is by no means improbable, that the ancient Egyptian Hermes-goblet, goblet of Dschemschid, Hercules, or Bacchus, may have mingled with the mysteries of our fable. Dschemschid is the hero of the traditions and songs of the Persians, as Solomon was that of the Hebrews, and Alexander that of the Greeks. He built Estthacar, which signifies a town hewn out of a rock; in digging the foundations of which he discovered the miraculous goblet Giam, (Dschaam,) also called the mirror of the world, the magic mirror, and the cup of salvation.<sup>4</sup>

A rich field has been opened for hypotheses, and the learned will doubtless make much greater discoveries; but, nevertheless, the origin of the Holy Graal is not thus ascertained.

<sup>1</sup> According to the German poem of "Singerkrieg uf Wartberg," the Lapis exillix fell from the crown of Lucifer, and was hurled with him to the earth, where the Graal was manufactured from it.

<sup>2</sup> Vide the Koran translated from that of George Sale, by Arnold, Lemgo, 1746, p. 148.—Assemanni Bibl. Oriental. T. III. P. II. p. 585 et sequent.

<sup>3</sup> Vide G. Sale, L. c. p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Kreuzer. Symbolik.

## No. II.

THE TEMPLARS, AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE  
SANGRAAL.

It was not till the institution of the order of Templars that the tradition of the Sangraal first began to assume a defined form ; and with regard to the influence which this order exercised upon our tradition, we may be allowed to detail the points on which history agrees with the German poems of Percival and Titurel, both of which are derived from French sources.

The words Tempelherren, (Templiers, Templars,) and the Templeisen in Titurel, at once point out a relation between them. In like manner as the Miles Templi fights for the honour of the Cross, and for the protection of pilgrims, so the Templeise, by night and day, fights for the glory of the Sangraal entrusted to his care, and guards the land wherein it is preserved.

The order chooses its own grandmaster, and the most remote member may suddenly be appointed ; no human power directs the election, it is settled by divine inspiration. So in the story, the king of the Graal is sent for, and should he be in the most distant corner of the earth, or in the depth of the *Lebermeeres*, yet the Graal's messenger, Cundric the sorceress, will be able to discover the selected one.

The grandmaster stands only second to the Pope, as the representative of Christ, and possesses and performs the rite of absolution. The King of the Graal is freed from all deadly sins, and lives in angelic purity in the sight of God upon earth. Happy is he, whose children are destined by the Graal to be his servants, they are all called in very early youth to Mont Salvage.

The Latin regulations of the Templars objected to taking children into the order; but Guido, brother of the Dauphin of Auvergne, was a Templar at eleven years old. Parents used frequently to destine their children to the order; for instance, Guillaume de Beauvais extended this decision even to children yet unborn.

Only children of pure birth could be chosen as servants of the Graal; and only knights, or the sons of a knight and a lady of noble birth, were admitted to the order of Templars, even the natural children of kings and princes being excluded.<sup>1</sup>

The vow of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and the defence of the Holy Land, were the four vota substantia ordinis. Be chaste, and brave with devoutness, says the law of the Graal; and Amfortas is made to suffer heavily for the violation of this command.

Every thing is in common with the Templars, and neither the grandmaster nor any member dare suffer a brother to possess any thing as his own, even were it of no more value than a halfpenny. In like manner, the Graal alone distributes all human necessaries in abundance to the Templeisin.

Admission cannot be obtained to the order by force; the choice of the brothers depending on the order itself. Thus Mont Salvage is inaccessible, and it is never discovered by the uncalled or unconsecrated, be he heathen or christian.

The King of the Graal may marry, and the Graal has a number of chosen female ministers. The grandmaster of the Templars dare not marry; but there are many indications which prove, that from the foundation of the order he had sisters living in the establishment; for which reason the Latin regulations (chap. 56.) forbid for the future such

<sup>1</sup> Vide Moldenhawer, Prozess gegen die Templeherren, p. 345, 28, 35.

communities as dangerous, and which might, in *earlier times*, have occasioned irregularities.<sup>1</sup>

The splendour of the Castle of the Graal, and the solemn processions at the time of the carrying of the sanctuary, correspond to the magnificence of the divine service as performed by the Templars. Jacob Molay, the last grand-master, acknowledged that he knew of no order whose churches and chapels were more richly ornamented, so well supplied with every requisite for performing divine service, or better served by the priests.<sup>2</sup>

It may be permitted here to mention the description of the Temple of the Graal in Titurel, although it is not perhaps to be found in the French poem. The Graal temple is a rotunda—the churches of the Templars are also round. At Mont Salvage there are only two bells; which accords with the custom of the Cistercians and Bernardines, whose rules the Templars followed.

In the administration of the Holy Sacrament, the Templars differed from the Romish liturgy, and on presenting the host, or consecrated wafer, made use of the first words of St. John's Gospel. In Percival likewise these words are frequently repeated;<sup>3</sup> and it is worthy of remark, that they are distinctly applied at the baptism of Feireliss.

Whoever penetrates deeper into the mysteries of this order will, without doubt, discover other dogmatical proofs of relationship; this is certain, that the Templars had a secret dogma peculiar to themselves, which must exist in every order, or community strictly separated from the rest of the world, especially when, like the Templars, it pursues worldly as well as religious objects. We may,

<sup>1</sup> Moldenhawer, l. c. p. 113, 410. Dupuis, *Histoire des Templiers*, II. p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> Moldenhawer, l. c. p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Vide Percival, translated by San Marte, p. 549, 565.

however, lay aside the prolix and complicated enquiry as to how far the accusations against the Templars of crimes and heresies have been substantiated, and whether this secret doctrine contained any, or what proportion, of Gnostic elements, and what relation it might have had with the celebrated Mysterium Baffometi, the idol Baphomet, called by the Saracens Yalla, from which finally the poet of Garin de Loherain has made a King Beaufumés;<sup>1</sup> whether it were a *Johannes-teufels* or a cat's-head,<sup>2</sup>—all this we may put aside, because such enquiries have not contributed in any way to throw light upon our tradition; neither does a cultivation of the Provençal, Norman-English, or German enable us to discover anything of the Garsis, and of those crimes and heresies. One point only is worthy of remark, and this certainly appears to stand in connexion without our tradition. The following is the third point of accusation against the Templars, which Du Puy (l. c. chap. 8. p. 22.) had given abridged from the Chronicles of St. Denis:—“Car tantôt après ils allaient adorer une idole, et pour certain, icelle idole étoit une vieille peau, ainsi comme toute embamée et comme toile polie, et illecques ccrtes le Templier mettoit sa très vile foi et créance, et ea lui très fermement croioit, et en icelle avoit es fosses des eux escarboucles, reluisans comme clairté du ciel; et pouen certain toute leur espérance étoit en icelle, et étoit leur Dieu souverain, et mêmement se affioit en lui de bon cœur.”

<sup>1</sup> Mone, Anzeiger für Kunde des Mittelalters, 1833, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Von Hauer, Myster. Baphom. revelat. in der Fundgruben des Orients, B. VI. Part 4. p. 481. 9.—Franz Maria v. Nell Gegenschrift darüber. Vienna, 1820. Kuriositäten, B. IX. p. 110, 118. B. VII. p. 142.—M. Marset, Journal des Savans, Avril, 1819.—Nicolai, Versuch über die Beschuldigungen des Tempelherrenordens, 1782, B. I.—Moldenhawer, Prozessactes, &c.—Münster, Statuterbuch des Tempelherrenordens.—Du Puy, His. des Templiers, Brussels, 1751.

The continuation of Cardinal Baronius's Church History, by Abraham Bzovius, contains extracts from a Venetian MS. in which we find the several points which the Italian bishops brought forward against the Templars; the 2nd. of which is as follows.

“Caput quoddam, faciem albam, quasi humanam, præ se ferens, capillis nigris et crispantibus, et circa collum de auratis ornatum, quod quidem nullius Sancti fuerat, culta latrize adorabant, orationes coram eo faciebant, et cingulis quibusdam illud cingentes illis ipsis, quasi solutores forent sese accingebant.”

And among the particular points at issue, which the Pope brought most prominent at the trial, was also,

“An cranicum, cattumve, aut similacrum quodpiam, et idolum hujusmodi fictum et commenticium, divina veneratione coluisserint, in magnis Comitiis aliove Fratrum loco, divitiasque ab eo, et terrarum, arborumve uberes fructus sperassen?”

Another point of accusation is nearly similar.”

“Item, quod dicebant quod illud caput poterat eos salvare, divites facere, quod omnes divitias Ordinis dabat eis quod facit arbores florere et terram germinare.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with this idea, Innocent 3d. in his Bull to the Grandmaster, Theodard de Berciacio, in 1208, designates the Templars as *utentes doctrines Dæmoniorum*.<sup>2</sup>

This and many other things indicate so forcibly some particular idol and secret mystery of the order, and point indeed so exactly to the fruitful power of the Holy Graal dispensing all spiritual and bodily necessities, that we can only remain in doubt, whether the accusers took their incriminating articles from the Romances of the Sangraal, or from fragments of the secret dogma of the Templars.

<sup>1</sup> Du Puy, l. c. p. 25, 29, 263.

<sup>2</sup> Epist. Innocent 3d. by Baluze. part 2. p. 68.

## No. III.

## THE GRAAL AND JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

ALTHOUGH Wolfram von Eschenbach gives us no distinct explanation of the Holy Cup in his *Percival*, yet he points out its nature and power with sufficient clearness to guide the reflecting reader to a right understanding of it, yet still he leaves it in such a truly poetical chiaroscuro, that a great diversity of explanations are possible, thus giving the mind constant food for meditation. The romance of Martin undoubtedly explains it as the cup of the holy communion, but the Norman-French give a different interpretation. The most complete account of the Sangraal, and Joseph of Arimathea, is contained in the prose romance of the *Sangraal*. “Joseph (ung gentilhomme chevalier, qui estoit adone nommé Joseph d’Arimathie, oultre la fleuve Jourdain; et, dit la lettre, qu’il fut estimé estre le père Samuel,) had lived seven years at Jerusalem, before the crucifixion of our Lord, and had observed the doctrines of Christ with his wife and son, named *Josephus*. After the crucifixion of our Saviour he went to the house of Simon, and enquired where Christ and the Twelve had supped? Simon showed him the place on the top of the house, and Joseph found there the same plate (ung plat ou escouelle) out of which the Lord had eaten with his disciples. Highly rejoiced he took it home with him, and deposited it in an honourable place. He then begged the corpse of Jesus from Pilate, took the body down from the cross with many tears, laid it in a rocky tomb which he had destined for his own family, and caught the blood, which ran from our Lord’s wounds at the time of interment, in that dish. But the Jews, enraged with Joseph, seized on him, and incarcerated him in a dark prison, five hours distant from Jeru-

salem, where the Saviour appeared to him, and brought him the dish containing the blood, and exhorted him to be of good cheer, for he would not perish, although Caiaphas had commanded that he should be starved to death; and further told him that he should come out again one day, and should find the world wonderfully changed. Joseph remained in this dungeon for forty two years, without any other assistance than that of God and the Holy dish, the power of which nourished him, and miraculously preserved his life. Then Titus, son of the emperor Vespasian, moved by the holy Veronika, and enlightened by a belief in Christianity, came with an army to Jerusalem to revenge the death of Christ, which he did by sacrificing all his persecutors and murderers. The wife and son of Joseph of Arimathea then appeared before him to complain of their husband's and father's fate, saying that they had heard nothing of him for forty two years. Thereupon Titus threatened to burn many of the Jews, unless they made known the place of Joseph's imprisonment. At last, Caiaphas, after extracting a promise from Titus that he would not take vengeance on him, led him into the prison of Joseph. Titus himself descended into the dungeon, into which he was lowered by ropes, and found it filled with a wonderful light. He called the prisoner by name, who answered, "Merciful God, who calls me?" Titus replied to him, "I am the son of the Emperor of Rome, and am come here to deliver you." When drawn up out of his prison, he was asked how long he thought he had been there, and he answered "only two days." So miraculously had God shortened to him the long weary time of his captivity. In the night previous to the departure of Titus for Rome, Jesus appeared at the bedside of Joseph, and ordered him to baptize Titus, and to take the dish with him, which would provide for all; and would grant to all those who served Him faithfully, every thing that their heart could desire. Thereupon he baptized Titus and all his

officers in the Euphrates secretly, in order that it might not come to the ears of Vespasian, he also collected all his relations and baptized them, and went with them to the Euphrates, in order to preach the word of Christ.

Not far from Bethany he was commanded by a heavenly vision to have a small chest made for the Holy Graal (for so this dish was called) to keep it therein, which he might open every day ; but no one was to be permitted to touch it save himself and his son.<sup>1</sup> Joseph and the holy pilgrims his companions were wonderfully sustained on the journey through the power of the Graal, and were not obliged to supply themselves with food. They came at last to Sarraz, a town between Babylon and Salmandra. The Saracens first took their name from this City; and the assertion that

<sup>1</sup> Enfin Joseph avoit été dans la maison où J. C. avoit fait la cène avec ses Apôtres, et y trouva l'escuelle, où le fief Dieu avoit mangié, il s'en sesist, il la porta chez lui, et il s'en servit pour ramasser le sang, qui coula du côté et des autres plaies; et cette escuelle est appellée le St Graal. (Rom. du St Graal par Robt. du Boron, f, 4<sup>o</sup>. vol. 2. MS. de l'Eglise de Paris, No. 7, of the same contents with the edition of 1523, f. 5<sup>o</sup>.)

Le St Graal est, le même qu le St Vaisseau, en forme de calice, qui n' estoit de metal, n'y de bois, n'y de corne, n'y d'or, et dans lequel fust mis le sang de notre Seigneur. (Rom. de Lancelot, T. II. f. 51<sup>o</sup>. col. 2.)

Le St Graal le méesme que le St Vaissel, dont on lit ici l'histoire ; les douze Apôtres y avait mangé l' aignol le jeudi absolu, (le jeudi saint) et il fust conservé en Angleterre danz une tour bastie exprès à Corbeniccy. (Rom. de Perceforest, T. VI. f. 120<sup>o</sup>. col. 2.)

The prose romance of Percival le Gallois agrees perfectly with the Romance of the Sangraal, although the account of the history of Joseph and his journey to England is much shorter. In that part of Percival which was written by Chrestien de Troyes, no mention is made of Joseph, although he might have heard of him through British Legends ; and it has not been sufficiently proved that Joseph was introduced into the romances prior to the year 1170.

their name was derived from Sara, the daughter<sup>1</sup> of Abraham, is not only highly improbable, but evidently false, for it cannot be believed that they would call themselves after the Mother of a Jewish tribe, but rather after the place where Joseph, by means of the Graal, converted them to a new religion, to which they strictly adhered until turned from it by Mahomet.<sup>2</sup>

Joseph and his companions went immediately to the Temple of the Sun, when King Enelach the Unknown, (le mescogneu,) for no one in his country knew from whence he had come, sat with his counsellors and wise men to advise and deliberate by what means they should be able to defend themselves against the Egyptians. Joseph, at once, preaches the Gospel to him and promises him a complete victory over the Egyptians and their King Ptolemais if he would embrace the christian religion. Enelach listens to the doctrines of Christ and the history of his life and sufferings with great attention, but cannot understand the mystery of his birth. Joseph gives himself a great deal of trouble to explain this, but in vain, until one night, after Enelach had become very meditative, he saw a wonderful vision of a tree split into three parts, each part bearing an inscription; the first in golden letters is *cy forme*; the second in silver, *cy sauvee*; the third in azure *cy purifie*. Thereupon a child enters his room through a marble door without opening it, mighty thunders shaking the Castle at the same time. Enelach in great alarm calls for his chamberlain, but a voice answers the astonished king, and explains the mystery of the incarnation so much to his satisfaction that he, his wife Sarasiste, the husband of his sister, Serafal, and his son Nascien, are all, with many others, baptized. The crucified Saviour himself appears to them

<sup>1</sup> Query Wife.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> Folio 9.

in person amid terrible peals of thunder, and raises Josephus, the son of Joseph, to the dignity of high priest (grant prebstre) of the whole world, explains to him the mysteries of the mass, and the signification of the insignia of the bishops, teaches him how to consecrate his flesh and blood, and in what manner to minister. Josephus appoints thirty three bishops in the different towns belonging to Enelach and Serafels, and the converters then proceed on their journey to seek for the bodies of the holy Hermits, whose names and histories are found in their tombs.

Previous to their departure they had supplied Enelach with a wonderful shield, by the power of which he succeeds in conquering the Egyptians and many other enemies. In the course of the journey Joseph and his companions arrive at Kamelot where they find King Agrestes and his people sunk in the grossest wickedness, “sire le plus felon et desloyal du monde et le plus cruel.” The people, however, soon adhere to the doctrines of Joseph, Agrestes rages with fire and sword against them, but divine miracles cause the new religion to extend on every side. Subsequently<sup>1</sup> the company, which is always sustained by the power of the Graal, visits Ebron, who has twelve sons whom he desires to see established in life; consults Joseph on the subject. Joseph enquires of each separately how he would wish to pass his life; eleven of them agree in choosing a worldly life and marriage, but the twelfth prefers a life of celibacy devoted to the service of the holy vessel. Joseph on this embraces and kisses him, and prepares a great feast. To the Eleven he said, “ You shall possess that which you desire, I will procure you wives, and may God bless your matrimony.” To the twelfth he said, “ Thou shalt be the keeper of the Holy Vessel after me, and when thou departest for a better world, thou shalt give it into the hands of another of devout principles

<sup>1</sup> Folio 103.

and conduct, and so it shall go on according to the judgment of each. They will be so blessed through the Holy Vessel, that their possessions will always prosper." Thus, there is nothing concerning an inscription on the Graal, by which the successors are chosen; it is the election of Grace, as in the Paronarzaled.

The missionaries proceed to Britain, and the number of professors of Christianity and of ministers to the Holy Graal increase continually, although now and then a black sheep may be found in the flock.

The twelfth son of Ebron was named Alain, and afterwards received the name of *the rich Fisherman*.

The wanderings of Joseph are continued long after this, till the narration runs into a confused genealogy of the posterity of Joseph, in which it loses itself entirely.

The romance of Percival however mentions incidentally and succinctly that "when Joseph was delivered from his danger by Vespasian and Titus, and brought to Rome, he took with him the Graal and the Holy Lamp; he afterwards went to Britain, became king of the country, and built the magnificent castle which the Roi Pecheur inhabits, in which he ordered these Holy relics to be kept."

Joseph of Arimathea is often mentioned by the Evangelists in a manner which may have led the Fathers of the Church and historians to mingle traditional legends with true history. In this manner Gregory of Tours<sup>1</sup> (born

<sup>1</sup> Histor. t. C. 21, Baronius, annal. eccles. Mayence 1601, T. 1. p. 265, ad ann. 34. ch. 192. Apprehensus et Joseph, qui eum (Christ.) aromatibus conditum in pro monumento recondidit, in cellam includitur, et ab ipsis sacerdotum Principibus custoditur, majorum in eum habentes sacritiam (ut gesta Pilati ad Tiberium missa referunt) quam in ipsum Dominum, cum ille a militibus, hic a sacerdotibus custodiatur. Sed resurgente Domino, visione Angelica territis, cum non inveniretur in tumulo, nocte pariet de cellula, in qua Joseph tenebatur, suspenduntur in sublimi; ipse vero de custodia, absolvente

544-595.) relates how he proves the fact of the imprisonment and liberation of Joseph upon the authority of the legal documents sent by Pilate to Tiberius at Rome, and according to Baronius (1300) this narrative, which does not appear very authentic, is also found in the *Pseudo Gospel* of Nicodemus, as well as his embarkation on the sea and passage to Britain, where he is said to have preached the Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear to us probable that the tradition of Joseph as a British Apostle was known in England previous to the 10th century, because the most ancient British Historians, Gildas, Bede, Nennius, Asserius, and others, who disdain to incorporate legends and tales in their historical works, but, on the contrary, made the propagation of Christianity and the extension of Church power their principal object, make no mention of him. Geoffrey of Monmouth is also silent respecting him, from whence we may infer that in the year 1140 the history of Joseph was not included in the popular traditions. According to William of Malmesbury, (de antiquit. Glaston. eccles. by T. Gale. T. I. p. 290.) Phillip is the peculiar Apostle of Britain. He says; "Post dominicæ resurrectionis Gloriam, ascension-

Angelo, liberatur, parietibus restitutis in locum suum. Cumque Pontifices militibus expobarent, et sanctum corpus ab iisdem instanter requirent, dicunt eis milites: "Reddite vos Joseph, et nos reddimus Christum: sed ut verum cognovimus, nec vos benefactorem Dei, nec nos filium Dei reddere nunc valemus." Tum illis confutatis milites ab hac accusatione liberantur, &c.

<sup>1</sup>Baronius, l. c. ad ann. 35. c. v. p. 327. Lazarum, Mariam Magdalenum, Martham et Marcellam pedissequam in quos Judei majori odio exardescabant non tantum Hierosolimus pulsos esse, sed una cum Maximinio discipulo navi absque remigio impositos in certum periculum mori fuisse creditos, quos divina providentia *Massiliam* tradunt appulisse, comitan'que ferunt ejusdem discriminis *Josephum ab Arimathea* nobilem decurionem, quem *tradunt* ex *Galliâ* in *Britanniam* navigasse, illicque post *predicatum* *Evangelium* diem clausisse extreum.

isque Triumphum, ac Spiritus Paracleti de supernis missionem, qui discipulorum corda temporalis pœnæ adhuc formidine trepidantia replevit—invidiæ fascibus accensi saecordotes Judæorum, cum Pharisæis et scribis connectaverunt persecutionem in ecclesia, interficiendo proto-martyrem Stephanum, et fere a finibus suis omnes procul pelentes. Hac igitur persecutionis procella sæviente, dispersi credentes petierunt diversa regna terrarum a Domino sibi delegata, verbum salutis gentis propinando. Sanctus autem *Philippus*, ut testatur *Ferculfus*, l. II. c. 4. regionem Francorum adiens gratia prædicandi, plures ad fidem convertit ac baptizavit; volens igitur verbum Christi dilatari, duodecim ex suis discipulis elegit ad prædicandam Incarnationem Jesu Christi, et super singulos manum dexteram devotissime extendit, et ad evangelizandum verbum vitæ misit in *Brittaniam*; quibus, *ut ferunt*, carissimum amicum suum *Joseph ab Arimathea*, qui et Dominum sepelivit, præfecit. Venientes igitur in Brittaniam anno ab incarn. Dom. LXIII, Rex autem Barbarus cum sua gente tam nova audiens et inconsueta (King Agrestes of the Romance) omnino prædicationi eorum consentire renuebat, nec paternas traditiones commutare volebat."

The King thereupon gives them a woody marshy island, called by the inhabitants *Yniswitrin*, where they are commanded by the Angel Gabriel in a vision to build a chapel, to the honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. "Hoc autem se habere, tum ex carta Beati Patricii, tum ex scriptis seniorum cognoscimus," p. 292. This island, called *Yniswitrin* by the Britons, was named *Glastgebirg* by the Angles after their king *Glasteing*, and also *Avallon*, the apple island, because *Glasteing* found an excellent apple tree near this Chapel, and it is said the island was named from it. To the authors of romance, the connection between Joseph and Arthur, who died in this same island of *Avallon*, was now closely established; the

above *ut ferunt*, however, seems to place the story among legends and traditions in 1143, at the time of William of Malmesbury. The prose romance of Merlin, in the thirteenth century, speaks rather more at length with regard to it than William does; and previous to that century Joseph certainly had not attained any degree of eminence and celebrity in the romances. The quoted book of St. Patrick makes no mention of Joseph; but relates, that when he went to Avallon, in 430, he found twelve brothers, whom he instructed in the rules of the order; and, according to their tradition, they were the twelve disciples of Philip and James, who founded the chapel situated there, and which William relates very particularly. This tradition received fresh support from the Pseudo Dexter, which was discovered towards the end of the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, the old tradition was current in England, of Joseph's having been the first Apostle to that country. This is proved by the papers of the Council of Constance, (sess. 30,) and by the book which Robert Wingfield, Ambassador of Henry VIII. of England, presented, in 1517, to the Emperor Maximilian I. under the title, *Discept. super dignitate etc. Regnor. Brittan. et Gallici in Concilio Constantiensi habita.* The sepulchral chapel of Joseph is still shown among the ruins of the ancient Abbey of Glastonbury, in Somersetshire.<sup>1</sup>

It is however certain, that the later romance writers frequently confounded Joseph of Arimathea with Josephus the historian; and, in short, this branch of the tradition seems to have been principally worked out by learned monks, from whom the Trouveres and romancers received them, and probably never transferred them into their romances previous to the last ten years of the twelfth century.

<sup>1</sup>Card. Bona, *Rer. liturg. lib. c. not. R. Sala.* T. I. p. 106 & 108.—Dugdale, *Monast. Anglic.* T. I. p. 1.—Rickman, *Gothic Architect.* in England, ed. 3, p. 307.

Josephus, the son of Mathathias, of the tribe of the high priests, (born ann. 37.) undertook a journey to Rome in his twenty sixth year, on account of some high priests who had been sent captives to Rome by Felix, the Governor of Judea. He obtained their pardon from Nero, and returned to Judea; and, at the general insurrection of the Jews, placed himself at the head of the Galileans; but he was obliged to save himself, with forty other men, by lying concealed in a well, *where they contrived to sustain themselves for a long time in a most wonderful manner*, till at last, discovered and taken prisoner by Vespasian, and threatened with death,<sup>1</sup> he foretold to him that he should wear the crown of Rome. Titus subsequently took him a second time to Rome, and treated him with the most distinguished marks of approbation on account of his learning.<sup>2</sup> The captivity and wonderful preservation of Josephus are almost identical with the romances; the prophecy to Vespasian reminds us of the conversion of Titus and Enelach, whom the tradition seems to have concealed in Vespasian. The Romance of St. Graal relates rather curiously, that Joseph's son, the bishop Joseph, on the occasion of the conversion of Enelach le mescogneu, related the secret history of his life; according to which he was born in Gaul, at Meaux in Brie, from whence Augustus sent him as a hostage to Rome, with two sons of Count Cenis, the lord of the whole territory of Meaux; he was confided to the care of Count Felix, who was afterwards Governor of Syria, and made him partner in his dignity of Governor, &c. &c. &c. The warlike movements of Joseph remind us of Josephus' participation in the insurrection, and Count Felix is the prototype of the Governor Felix, who occasioned the visit of Josephus to Rome. On the other hand, Vespasian appears again in

<sup>1</sup> Otto von Freissingen, Chron. l. III. c. 18. Basil, 1569.

<sup>2</sup> Josephus de Vita sua.—Eusebius in Chron. &c.

Provencal tradition, in the Poem of Titurel, where he conducts Parille with pomp from Jerusalem to Rome, as Titus conducted Josephus; and Parille propagates the Christian doctrine in France, Anjou, and Cornwall, as Joseph of Arimathea did in Marseilles and Britain. Nevertheless, the *Joseph of History* and the *Joseph of the Legends* have no connection with the Holy Graal, if by this is understood the cup, or dish, of the Lord's Supper. The latter signification however, and that the blood of Christ had been received in it, seem to be placed in connection with historical facts.

Cæsarea was highly venerated by the Crusaders. The Apostle Paul had here undergone a long imprisonment,<sup>1</sup> and the Apostle Philip had a house here, which was shown to the faithful in 1101, when the town was taken.<sup>2</sup> When Cæsarea was plundered, a cup was found, which, in the division of the booty, was valued to the Genoese at an enormously high price. The sanctity of the place of its discovery gave it an additional value; and the Genoese, rejoicing in their acquisition, placed it in the Chapel of St. John the Baptist in the Cathedral of St. Lorenzo, at Genoa. The discovery of this wonderful cup, of inestimable value, made a great sensation among the Crusaders, for it was believed to be cut from one enormous emerald; and although scarcely any historian of the twelfth century omits the mention of this great event, yet no one affirms that the blood of Christ is said to have been kept in it; it is rather the preciousness, splendour, and mystery of the material whereof it is formed, that excite their observation.<sup>3</sup> Alberic des Trois Fontaines, (middle of the

<sup>1</sup> Jacobus de Vitriaco, L. 1. c. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Monach. L. 8, in fine. 1120 died. Gesta Dei per Francos.

<sup>3</sup> William of Tyre, L. x. c. 16. "In hoc eodem Oratorio (quod situm erat in loco edito ubi olim ab Herode ad honorem Augusti

thirteenth century,) who appeals in his chronicle to Bede, Helionandus, Otto von Freisingen, William of Malmesbury, &c. and also to Turpin, Merlin, and the Cantilenæ Heroicæ, as authorities to be relied on, and who places the story of the dog of Aubry (Albreius) of Galleron, and the treacherous family of Ganalon, of the combat of Charlemagne and his Paladins, St. William, Gerard of Rousillon, Amelius and Amicus, &c. by the side of historical facts, makes no mention of this signification of the Vessel,<sup>1</sup> as the dish of the Holy Supper, or receiver of the blood; and the care which Alberic takes to mention his authorities, proving that the traditions which he relates were considered to be really true and were generally believed, it consequently follows, that the narrative of the Graal and of the blood of the Redeemer was not considered as belonging to them, and must, in his time, have been in its infancy, or must at least

Cæsaris miro opere dicitur fabricatum templum) repertum est *vas coloris viridissimi*, in modo *paropædis* formatum, quod prædicti Januenses, *smaragdinum* reputantes, pro multa summa pecunie in sortem recipientes, ecclesiæ sue pro excellenti obtulerunt ornatu. Unde et usque hodie transeuntibus per eos magnatibus vas idem quasi pro miraculo solent ostendere, persuadentes quod vere sit, id quod color esse indicat, *smaragdus*." Otto von Freisingen (1159) mentions it in a similar manner. Robertus Monachus (1120,) Jacobo di Vitriaco, Maimondus de Agiles, Baldricus, Albertus Aquensis, (Gesta Dei per Francos.)

<sup>1</sup> Chronic. ad ann. 1101. "Civitate (Cæsarea) violenter effracta cives in quoddam oratorium suum confugerunt, ubi tanta fuit strages eorum, quod columnarum bases sanguis tingeret occisorum, ubi participes illius victoris Januenses, vas *viridissimi coloris* repertum, et in modum *paropædis* formatum, pro multa summa pecunie recipientes in sortem, pro excellenti obtulerunt ornatu Ecclesiæ sue." Acces. Histor. T. II. ed. Leibnitz, Hanover, 1698. Marinus Canutus, (about 1321,) Lib. Secret. L. III. P. VI. c. 4. ad ann. 1101. "Ibi Januenses repertum *vas pretiosum*, sive de lapide viridi, quem Smaragdum asserunt, pro parte mercedis acceperunt, et matrici ecclesiæ dederunt." (Gesta Dei per Francos.)

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